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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Sounds of Subic Bay:
The U.S. Navy in the Philippines, 1950-1971

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Music

by

Kevin Sliwoski

September 2019

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Sounds of Subic Bay:
The U.S. Navy in the Philippines, 1950-1971

by

Kevin Sliwoski

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Music
University of California, Riverside, September 2019
Dr. Deborah Wong, Chairperson

Sounds of Subic Bay is a “history through sound” of U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay in the Philippines during the 1950s and 1960s. During these two decades, Subic Bay grew into one of the U.S. Navy’s most important overseas military bases due to its role as a repair, supply, and logistics station during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. I write about how the sounds produced by U.S. Naval personnel, materials, and infrastructures functioned as structural forces at the base, and I focus on the base’s domestic, city, and industrial sound spaces. I demonstrate that writing history from a sonic perspective complicates and enriches understandings of the Navy’s role and presence overseas in the Philippines. I argue that a sonic analysis of Naval Base, Subic Bay highlights the importance of culture in military histories, and the importance of military analyses to ethnomusicology.

I introduce the methodology “oblique listening,” a technique of reading and analyzing U.S. naval and other archival sources ethnographically. Through oblique listening I identified sound in historical materials and used that information to comment on issues of culture and militarization. I also frame my research around the concept of “self-noise,” a technical, submarine term that I repurpose to interrogate the impact of military sound at Naval Base, Subic Bay. I write about how Navy-produced sounds influenced life at the base, and I ask why those sounds are rarely part of histories of Subic Bay, and how sound changes understandings of the Navy’s history at Subic Bay. I ask questions like, “what did U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay sound like?” “Why did the base sound the way it did?” “What can sound tell us about U.S.-Philippine history?” “How do sound, politics, and militarization intersect?” “How were military sounds heard and politicized?” I argue that sound reflected and influenced the political, military, and cultural impact of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines. This history through sound of the U.S. Navy at Subic Bay challenges familiar historical narratives of the naval base, highlights neglected people, places, and moments, and demonstrates that sounds are important to and embedded in U.S. Naval history.

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Abbreviations

Archives

NHHC: Naval History and Heritage Command

NARA-San Bruno: National Archives and Records Administration – San Bruno

Military Terminology

CBMU: Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit

CINCFE: Commander in Chief, Far East

CINCPACFLT: Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

CO: Commanding Officer

COMNAVIAIRPAC: Commander, Naval Air Force, Pacific Fleet

COMNAVFE: Commander Naval Forces, Far East

COMNAVFORV: Commander, Naval Forces Vietnam

COMUSNAVPHIL: Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Philippines

DOD: Department of Defense

DON: Department of the Navy

FEAF: Far East Air Force

FECOM: Far East Command

MARDET: Marine Detachment

MCB: Mobile Construction Battalion

NACCOMMSTA: Naval Communications Station

NAS: Naval Air Station

NAVFAC: Naval Facilities and Engineering Command

NAVSTA: Naval Station

NSD: Naval Supply Depot

USMC: United States Marine Corps

USN: United States Navy

USS: United States Ship

WESTPAC: Western Pacific

Chapter I: Sounds of Subic Bay

Sounds of Subic Bay is a “history through sound” of U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay in the Philippines during the 1950s and 1960s. During these two decades, Subic Bay grew into one of the U.S. Navy’s most important overseas military bases due to its role as a repair, supply, and logistics station during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. I write about how the sounds produced by U.S. Naval personnel, materials, and infrastructures functioned as structural forces at the base, and I focus on the base’s domestic, city, and industrial sound spaces. I demonstrate that writing history from a sonic perspective complicates and enriches understandings of the Navy’s role and presence overseas in the Philippines. I argue that a sonic analysis of Naval Base, Subic Bay highlights the importance of culture in military histories, and the importance of military analyses to ethnomusicology.

I introduce the methodology “oblique listening,” a technique of reading and analyzing U.S. naval and other archival sources ethnographically. Through oblique listening I identified sound in historical materials and used that information to comment on issues of culture and militarization. I also frame my research around the concept of “self-noise,” a technical, submarine term that I repurpose to interrogate the impact of military sound at Naval Base, Subic Bay. I write about how Navy-produced sounds influenced life at the base, and I ask why those sounds are rarely part of histories of Subic Bay, and how sound changes understandings of the Navy’s history at Subic Bay. I ask questions like, “what did U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay sound like?” “Why did the base sound the way it did?” “What can sound tell us about U.S.-Philippine history?” “How do sound, politics, and militarization intersect?” “How were military sounds heard and politicized?” I argue that sound reflected and

influenced the political, military, and cultural impact of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines. This history through sound of the U.S. Navy at Subic Bay challenges familiar historical narratives of the naval base, highlights neglected people, places, and moments, and demonstrates that sounds are important to and embedded in U.S. Naval history.

While I focus on the impact of U.S. naval sound in the Philippines to work through these questions, my interest in sonic-military histories stems from larger questions and interests about ethnomusicology, sound studies, politics, militarization, and foreign affairs. Can ethnomusicologists write about military subjects? Do sound and militarization intersect? How can music studies influence or critique international relations and politics? Should ethnomusicologists do so? From those larger questions, I ask, did sound impact U.S.-Philippine history? What did Subic Bay sound like? Who listened to the base? What did they hear? I learned that Subic Bay sounded like an industrial workshop and a suburban neighborhood; an island resort and a shooting range. The base contained sounds like voices, vehicles, performances, laughter, explosions, aircraft engines, Tagalog, children, and ships. There were many listeners, and what one heard depended on location. Space structured sound, and sound structured space. I found that military sounds can be political forces and do affect and structure life at overseas U.S. military bases. In the historical record of Naval Base, Subic Bay, sound was present, felt, and observed by a range of people associated with the base. The sounds of overseas U.S. military bases reveal much about the impact of the U.S. military on local communities, people, and culture. These also show how service members and their families made sense of their everyday militarized lives.

I focus on the U.S. Navy's sonic culture and how that culture impacted life at Naval Base, Subic Bay. This is a sonic history rather than a political or economic history. I use sound as a method and as a source to discuss complex cultural issues about the history of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines during the 1950s and 1960s. To interpret sources through sound, I used what I call the oblique listening method. The idea of oblique listening is to locate sound in sources that do not address it directly, but indirectly, or obliquely. Oblique listening assumes that sound is always present in historical materials. I used this method to read and interpret naval records from Subic Bay and the two interviews I conducted. Oblique listening reinforces that this is a historical sound studies research project.

Although I am an ethnomusicologist and I include music and performances as examples, I focus on non-musical naval sounds and materials. The sounds of the base's distinct, yet overlapping social and sonic areas, including the domestic, city, and industrial ones, shaped the physical spaces of the naval base. I examine the history of U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay between 1950-1971, and address how sound, space, and politics intertwined at the naval base. During this twenty-one-year period, Subic Bay transitioned from a Western Pacific U.S. military outpost to a massive logistical and support hub for the U.S. Navy during peak years of the Vietnam War. Events between these years brought changes to the physical and imagined landscapes of the base. The better-known 1970s and 1980s-era Subic Bay transformed into that place because of events and policies from the 1950s and 1960s. A sound studies approach to the Navy's history in the Philippines asks new questions about naval history and how to use sound as an interpretive method.

Sound Studies and Music Studies

Sound studies scholars and artists critique the occularcentrism of the humanities and work to rehear familiar and accepted narratives. Their goals include deconstructing the hierarchy of the senses and placing the ear alongside of the eye.¹ The starting point for sound studies is R. Murray Schafer's *The Soundscape* (1977). Schafer coined several key terms that established a sonic vocabulary and a framework for writing about and studying sound. Terms such as *sound imperialism*, "when sound power is sufficient to create a large acoustic profile," and *keynote sounds*, "those which are heard by a particular society continuously or frequently enough to form a background" structure this research.² Schafer's *soundscape*, or, "the sonic environment," is his enduring contribution to sound studies.³ Schafer's work continues to fuel sound scholarship, and scholars today engage and debate his written and recorded projects.

Schafer argued that the habitual noise of industrialization operated imperialistically on pre-modern, rural, or naturally occurring soundscapes. Both soundscape and sound imperialism are terms that Schafer employs to express his preference for pre-modern, natural sound environments and his disdain for the dissonant, modern, industrialized world. The soundscape Schafer longed for was a natural sonic ecology, victim to the grind of industrialization and electricity, drowned out by the roar of urban noise pollution. Scholars like Ari Kelman, David Novak, and Matt Sakakeeny, however, caution readers to treat Schafer's romanticized agrarian sonic purity critically, because that view doesn't leave space for urban or other kinds of sound studies.⁴ Schafer used the soundscape as an equivalent to landscape, but it is an uneven analogy. There are different, unique limits inherent to each

concept. Schafer thought about space but did not consider the overlap of the senses in both landscape and soundscape. The terms are better wielded in tandem, or as two sensory approaches for experiencing the world. Departing from Schafer's urban-rural binary allows scholars to consider other sonic environments, such as a U.S. military base, which disrupts Schafer's noise-silence, urban-rural binaries. Some military bases -- like Subic Bay -- are both rural and urban.

While Schafer's work was a useful sounding board for my ideas, anthropologist Steven Feld's work in music, sound, and *acoustemology* also influenced my thinking about the epistemological possibilities of sonic research. Acoustemology, a portmanteau of acoustic and epistemology, is "sound as a way of knowing," which Feld explains as a relational ontology, a way that humans understand their place and their world through on-going, active, and deliberate listening practices. Borrowing from music, anthropology, film, and geography, Feld used acoustemology to expand his early concept "anthropology of sound" and departed from Schafer's "acoustic ecology" and "soundscape."⁵ Feld's goal for acoustemology was to provide a holistic approach to the study of sound and listening, one that accounted for "the sounding worlds of indigenous and emergent global geographies of difference across the divides of species and materials."⁶ Acoustemology, Feld argued, can -- and should -- account for sonic relationships between the human, non-human, organic and inorganic. Acoustemology emerged from participant-observant practices in anthropology and ethnomusicology, and its limits for sound research and sound histories is in its emphasis on the relational. A worldview developed through sound and derived from relationships does not apply neatly to a historical project. The interpersonal, temporal, and geographic

distance of historical research means that acoustemology and its emphasis on observation and relationships can take a researcher only so far. Although the oblique listening method I use is influenced by Feld and acoustemology, it is better suited to historical sound research and engaging with archival sources where an acoustemological approach functions better in a participant-observant setting.

After Schafer and Feld, Jonathan Sterne led the sonic turn in the humanities and scholars in many disciplines followed Sterne's example and generated new concepts and terminology to better understand and write about sound.⁷ Sterne's *The Audible Past* remains a high point for sound studies. Sterne created a historical sound study and focused on technology to create his narrative. He gave voice to objects and turned recording technologies into characters alongside the people who used and consumed that technology. He guided readers to hear the past in new ways and to appreciate how recordings changed culture and society. These efforts helped scholars expand sound research beyond film and media departments that dominated the early years of the sonic turn.⁸ Sterne reaches for "larger intellectual domains" through a sound studies history. He writes that, "because scholarship on sound has not consistently gestured toward more fundamental and synthetic theoretical, cultural, and historical questions, it has not been able to bring broader philosophical questions to bear on the various intellectual fields that it inhabits."⁹ Sterne argues that sound studies can advance up the intellectual hierarchy by going bigger and broader, by asking and answering cultural and historical questions that other fields cannot. I follow Sterne's example and use sound to interpret history, ask complicated questions, and connect sound to other theories and methodologies. I also like how Sterne uses technology –

sonic materials – to engage with the sonic past. Instead of grasping for ephemeral sounds, Sterne grounds his research through tactility. He examines documents, turn-of-the-century sound technologies, and other kinds of sonic materials to write a sonic interpretation of history. This model influenced my approach to this project, specifically chapter II which addresses the relationship between sound, material, and space.

Adjacent to Sterne’s research on the audible past is ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman’s writing about the *ethnomusicological past* and the temporal peculiarity of fieldwork. He writes that to learn about the present is to lean on a history of accumulated past traditions, two knowledge pools at once linked together yet forever distant. Bohlman describes how “the boundaries between the past and the present become themselves the “field,” a space allowing one to experience and represent musical practices that are not simply inscriptions of the historical past or aural events of the immediate present.”¹⁰ I find myself in a similar median, between an audible past and competing perspectives.

Bohlman and other ethnomusicologists embrace historical ethnomusicology, a subfield within ethnomusicology. Historical ethnomusicologists focus on past musical cultures and traditions and often rely on historical documents as supporting evidence. Participant-observant ethnomusicological fieldwork, during which the researcher’s need to integrate into a community and learn in the present moment has been the dominate method of contemporary ethnomusicological fieldwork. It can sometimes deemphasize historical continuums. Historical ethnomusicologists confront this challenge and work on bridging the distance between the ethnomusicological past and present.¹¹ Writing in 1980, ethnomusicologist Kay Kaufman Shelemay argued that ethnomusicology’s “break” from

historical musicology created arbitrary methodological distinctions within music research. She writes that “musicology was seen as an essentially historical pursuit while ethnomusicology had as its subject matter living conditions.”¹² In their 2014 edition *Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology*, editors Jonathan McCollum and David G. Herbert echoed Shelemay, writing how, “success of ethnographic methodologies has subtly undermined the perceived value of historical study, leading a new generation of scholars to pursue interests other than the any potentially valuable studies that would reflect on past (or very recent) music cultures.”¹³ Shelemay, McCollum and Herbert argue that ethnomusicology’s success through ethnographic methods has inadvertently marginalized history. Historical ethnomusicologists seek to harmonize the ethnographic with the historical, the distance between people and texts.

Sound studies, with exceptions, also struggled to develop a historical dimension.¹⁴ Historian Mark M. Smith felt the sonic turn in the humanities was “a product of research by anthropologists, ethnologists, or ethnomusicologists and thus lacks an explicitly historical dimension.”¹⁵ Sound studies scholars are meeting Smith’s challenge, although his critique neglected contributions towards sound history from film studies and media studies. An amendment to Smith’s point might be that sound studies engage with *things* of the past, but not with the tone or implications of the historical period. My research is historical. I seek a blend of ethnomusicology, sound studies, and military history. To understand the reach of U.S. militarism through sound in the Philippines, I revisit, reconstruct, and rehear military sounds of the past. This project is about listening to the U.S. Navy’s past, a search for what Emily Thompson termed *acoustic signatures*. Thompson describes how an acoustic signature

emerges from *reverberation*, “the lingering over time of residual sound in a space.” Although the relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines changed since the 1960s, I want to revisit the past and understand how sonic moments and experiences at Subic Bay continue to reverberate; to understand how the U.S. Navy understood the impact of its self-noise overseas in the Philippines.

The (Sonic) Military Turn

In recent music studies scholarship, scholars address war, trauma, sound, and militarism. Studies from Suzanne Cusick, J. Martin Daughtry, Lisa Gilman, Jonathan Pieslak, Steve Goodman, and Jim Sykes expanded the thinking about the spaces and research participants with whom musicologists and ethnomusicologists can study.¹⁶ I think the military turn is the most important and most interesting intervention in music and sound studies. Cusick and Daughtry, specifically, changed the political stakes within music studies. They went after fraught topics like torture and wartime violence, demonstrated that sound and music affect geopolitics and militarization, and held on to their professional ethics and standards. Daughtry’s *Listening To War* (2015) is the closest model for my research. I expand on Daughtry’s concept of the *belliphonic*, “the spectrum of sounds produced by armed combat.”¹⁷ I differ from Daughtry in that I focus on the belliphonic beyond the battlefield, what he describes as the “sonic material that is less directly or conventionally associated with warfare.”¹⁸ In dialogue with Daughtry, I address how military bases factor into the scope of the belliphonic, as autonomous sonic microcosms, and as staging grounds for war. While I contribute to the growing body of work on sound and war, my project emphasizes the past. Daughtry, Cusick, Pieslak, and Gilman address the recent American wars in Iraq and

Afghanistan. Other scholars also circle around sound and war, including Charles Ross, Mark Smith, David Suisman, and Jessica Schwartz.¹⁹ Music and sound studies scholars affiliated with the military turn, however, have not focused on military bases.

In 1990, former U.S. ambassador John W. McDonald wrote about the lack of critical scholarship or interest in military bases, despite their obvious importance and ubiquity:

Military bases negotiations have not been paid much attention by the press, the general public, or the academic community, despite the fact that the United States is almost constantly in the process of negotiating rights to bases in a dozen or so foreign countries.²⁰

McDonald referred to the politics of military base negotiations, but his observation applies to studies on military bases. In the thirty years after McDonald's comment, scholars across the humanities breached the subject of military bases and provided much needed critical commentary, beginning with Catherine Lutz's study on Ft. Bragg (2001).²¹ During the past two decades, scholars addressed the military base scholarship lacuna and produced a series of critical studies on military bases, including works by Katherine T. McCaffrey (2002), Elliott Converse V. (2005), Mark Gillem (2007), Alexander Cooley (2008), Trevor Paglen (2009), Jana K. Lipman (2009), David Vine (2009, 2011), Erin Fitz-Henry (2015), and Sasha Davis (2015).²² The one earlier and relevant exception is William E. Berry's *U.S. Bases in the Philippines* (1989).²³

In addition to research about sound, war, and military bases, studies and histories of the Vietnam War also inform my project. The U.S. Government's role in Vietnam brought

changes to Subic Bay during the 1950s and 1960s. This was evident post-1964 after the Tet Offensive, when the United States committed huge numbers of ground combat troops to Vietnam. The escalating war in Vietnam resulted in a concurrent buildup of forces, infrastructure, and activities at Subic Bay. Understanding the sound life at Subic Bay of the 1950s and 1960s requires an understanding of the Vietnam War. Like many people, I started with Marilyn B. Young's *The Vietnam Wars* (1991), and followed up with works by Christian G. Appy, H.R. McMaster, John Sherwood, Christina Schwenkel, and Ronald Spector.²⁴ These works address the Vietnam War through different perspectives and approaches, including race, labor, and politics. Although the Philippines is a background actor in these works, they provided me with a larger sense of the U.S. presence and impact in Southeast Asia beyond the Philippines.

Philippine Studies

While studies of sound and militarization serve as the theoretical skeleton for my project, Philippine and Filipino American studies challenge those perspectives. I rely on research from scholars like Christine Balance, Nerissa Balce, Martin Manalansan, Vicente Rafael, Sarita Echavez See, and Vernadette Vincuna Gonzalez. These scholars address transnationalism, migration, colonialism, and militarism as those forces relate to Philippine history and the Filipino diaspora.²⁵ These scholars engage with the impact of U.S. imperialism and colonialism in the Philippines and showed that these sites mediated the U.S.-Philippine relationship. This group of scholars is important because they are a new generation of Filipino and Filipino Americans engaging actively with legacies of U.S. power in the Philippines. Their research and their presence in the academy are a major shift away

from previous decades of Philippine scholarship, dominated by social scientists, bureaucrats, and reporters, overwhelmingly white males. The new Filipino Studies scholars rely on their training in cultural studies, American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Southeast Asian studies to challenge outdated perspectives and introduce new ones. Martin Manalansan and Augusto Espiritu captured the paradigm shift in Filipino and Philippine studies in their 2016 collection *Filipino Studies: Palimpsests of Nation and Diaspora*. The collection explicitly highlights Filipino and Filipino American scholars like Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, Neferti Tadiar, Denise Cruz, and their contributions to Philippine Studies.²⁶ Vicente Rafael anticipated the wave of critical Filipino and Philippine studies discourse, and his writing and presence continue to orient the discipline.²⁷

Their critical scholarship also challenges discourse on U.S.-Philippine military and diplomatic relations produced by foreign service officers, diplomats, military personnel, and politicians.²⁸ Although these insider perspectives offer a look at the mechanics of U.S. policy towards the Philippines, the literature favors U.S. security and economic interests above all else. These texts are unable to engage with culture as a facet of foreign relations and are best read in conjunction with the critical questions and methods generated by recent Philippine scholarship. Philippine Studies scholars show how race, gender, and sexuality were central to U.S. colonial power in the Philippines through the U.S. military. Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez, for example, addressed U.S. military masculinity and argues that U.S. troops stationed in the Philippines fulfilled “doubled subjectivity” as tourists and service members. She writes how U.S. troops encountered the Philippines as a tourist paradise and as an occupied territory, and that U.S. military culture governed their perspectives and normalized

the political and military asymmetries between the U.S. and the Philippines. Serving in the U.S. military also normalized racial and gendered expectations of the tropics, a kind of porno-tropics, borrowing from Anne McClintock.²⁹

Paul Kramer, Nerissa Balce, Christine Balance, Sarita Echavez See, Dylan Rodriguez, and Vicente Rafael also offer critical perspectives on race, the Philippines, and the US empire. In *The Decolonized Eye*, See addresses how Filipino Americans respond artistically to legacies of U.S. imperialism and colonialism in the Philippines. and her research intersects with other artists and scholars working on similar issues through the Center for Art and Thought.³⁰ Kramer writes how race defined American empire and imperial conquest in the Philippines. He argues that the U.S. exported its violent racial ideologies, but also developed and adapted them in the Philippines.³¹ Writing several years later and echoing Kramer, Balce wrote how U.S. colonial photography racialized and sexualized Filipino bodies. Images of the Philippines and Filipinos proliferated in the United States made U.S. imperial racial hierarchies and empire palatable to a vociferous and consuming public.³² Rafael also writes how white U.S. love for brown Filipinos “was predicated on white supremacy enforced through practices of discipline and maintained by a network of supervision.”³³ Rafael explains that U.S. colonial apparatuses in the Philippines contained inherent racial and gendered binaries. Kramer, Balce, and Rafael outline that studies about U.S.-Philippine history must address race in some way because that relationship developed from a racialized worldview. I critique U.S. naval power in the Philippines and write a new interpretation of the navy’s history at Subic Bay by combining elements of sound studies, music studies, military studies, and Philippine studies.

The history of the U.S. military in the Philippines, at Subic Bay and the overall history between the U.S. and the Philippines ripples out from the Philippine-American War. In *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War* Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia write about how for many decades the Philippine-American War was missing from the history of the United States, that it was more than just a “Philippine Insurrection.”³⁴ It was a colonial war during which the United States military killed thousands of Filipinos and destroyed aspects of Filipino historical memory and culture. The violence and subsequent colonial possession of the Philippines by the United States influenced the following decades of political, diplomatic, and military interactions between the U.S. and the Philippines during the twentieth century. The culture and institutions of the Philippines felt the legacies of American colonial and military violence, and the impact of U.S. Naval sounds at Subic Bay are also more fully understood against the backdrop of the U.S. military’s violent record in the Philippines.

Interventions

Scholarship dedicated to the Philippines – and to Subic Bay – focuses disproportionately on two blocks of time: 1898 – 1946, and 1970 – 1993. I focus on the neglected decades: the 1950s and the 1960s. Scholars focus on the American colonial period because that era historically received less critical examination. This resulted from decades of American colonial denial; U.S.-Philippine history has been a controversial subject for many Americans, leading to years of academic neglect. Scholars returned to Philippine studies and history with renewed interest beginning in the early 2000s, and many of these newer studies highlight U.S. interventions in the Philippines during the early twentieth century. The

colonial period found new life amongst scholars with the onset of the American War on Terror, and during the U.S. occupation of Iraq that began in 2003. Scholars identified a parallel to the Iraq War in the Philippine-American War and wrote with renewed vigor. Alfred McCoy, Nerissa Balce, Sharon Delmendo, Paul Kramer, and the Shaw and Francia collection are examples of that moment.³⁵ Studies on the history and politics of the Marcos regime, meanwhile, dominate the 1970-1993 period, and displace other historical issues and time periods.

Scholars ignore Subic Bay's history during 1950s and 1960s because the wars in Vietnam dominate studies of contemporary Southeast Asian history. Scholars often write mid-twentieth century United States history against the events of the Vietnam War, leaving limited space for studies on other areas that faced overseas U.S. militarization, like the Philippines or Thailand. The Philippines and the early Marcos years of the 1960s slipped through the academy's critical grasp and later taken up again in the 1970s and 1980s. The withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam once again left Subic Bay as the westernmost U.S. military outpost in the Pacific and in Southeast Asia. By the early 1970s, Subic Bay was a different place. It was crowded and reinvigorated from the war years. The local economies around the base also experienced growth and vitality.

Subic Bay was synonymous with prostitution in the 1970s and 1980s. The Navy's tacit support of prostituted Filipinas was a source of tension between the U.S. and the Philippines and used to leverage greater concessions and control over U.S. military activities in the Philippines. The 70s and 80s were also when the next set of military base negotiations took place, along with the first serious conversations about removing U.S. troops from the

Philippines. These negotiations overlapped with the Marcos years of martial law, the growth of a new Philippine nationalism, and the election of President Cory Aquino. Against this backdrop, the Subic Bay and the Philippines were favorite topics for newspaper reporters, think tanks, and other government committees. Scholarship on this time period focuses on prostitution, pseudo-anthropological cultural histories from the think tanks, and military writings about the economic and security benefits and dangers of maintaining a presence in the Philippines. Beyond content and sources, I intervene methodologically which I discuss in the following section and practice in each chapter.

Methodology, Materials, and Oblique Listening

I used ethnographic and archival methods to complete this research. I examined primary source materials at the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) at the Washington, D.C. Navy Yard, and at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at San Bruno. I read a range of records across the DOD, Navy, and State Department, and civilian contracts about Subic Bay and the Philippines. The documents I viewed at the NHHC in 2017 were a small fraction of what the archivists held in storage. The Department of the Navy restricted access to all archived Naval materials – including unclassified and declassified levels – at the Navy Yard for both civilians and DOD personnel.

I found that what wasn't present or available in the archives was as meaningful as what was available. I referred back to Ann Stoler's model of "archiving-as-process rather than archives as things."³⁶ I learned how tempting it is to depart the archive feeling as if armed with all the facts: the documents say an event happened a certain way in a record

from that moment in time. Stoler argues that there are certain “principles and practices of governance lodged in particular archival forms.”³⁷ The Navy and the U.S. Government had their own goals in documenting and preserving their records. What the Navy decided to keep reveals how the Navy viewed its image and the image it hoped to maintain. As I flipped through documents, I read how the Navy constructed and managed its image in the Philippines, which impacted how they recorded events. Understanding the content and construction of the archive requires critical reading. The U.S. Navy – like Stoler’s colonial Dutch administrators – is an institution invested in exhaustive documentation that comes with its own unique set of vocabulary, shorthand, and style. To arrive at a balanced interpretation, the researcher must place themselves in the past and read critically against the content. The goal is to achieve a degree of *empathetic listening*, *tactical listening*, and *listening as witness* to and within the history of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines.³⁸ To critique the Navy’s history in the Philippines means the researcher must engage with the Navy’s perspective and stance on that history.

To get a better sense of how U.S. naval sound, politics, and militarization intersected in the Philippines, I interviewed two U.S. Navy veterans – Jim Pope and David Ball – who spent time at Subic Bay during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Jim worked as a submarine sonar technician for twenty-seven years. He was born at his family’s farm in Avoca, Iowa in 1937, one of eight children. His family came to the United States from Germany and Scotland. They settled initially in Virginia before moving to Iowa. Jim provided for his family in his early teens as a farm hand and janitor in Iowa. Jim enlisted with the Navy, completed his training in the late 1950s, and then sailed through the Philippines. He returned to the

Philippines in the 1970s part of a team investigating naval postal fraud committed by Filipinos seeking commissions to the navy. Jim told me he enjoyed his stops at Subic Bay, meeting Filipinos, and listening to and observing life on and off base. Jim's role as a sonar technician instilled in him a discerning and critical ear. Sonar technicians received ear training like how musicians practice ear training. Instead of identifying intervals or sight singing, however, Jim learned to distinguish between the sounds of enemy submarines, allied submarines, and ocean life. Jim's training proved valuable during our conversation. Although I asked about Subic Bay's musical soundscape, Jim was more interested in thinking about different kinds of military sound. He had vivid memories of Subic Bay's sonic culture due to his listening training. Jim is a writer and retired to El Cajon, CA where he left the Navy.

David Ball served in several roles during his naval career. He worked on submarines, as a medic, and later found his calling as a Navy Diver. The Navy's commissioned harbor clearance diving units in 1966 for salvage, repair, clearance, and rescue in Western Pacific harbors and rivers. Units like David's supported servicemembers and ships during the Vietnam War. David went to the Subic Bay in 1964-1965 with the *USS Princeton* and received orders back to the Philippines in 1970 and departed in 1971. David married his wife in the Philippines during his second tour, but they left abruptly after their marriage due to legal complications and the drawdown of U.S. forces in Vietnam. David retired to San Diego where he is active in the Navy Diver's Association, a social group of former Navy Divers.³⁹ David recall of music at Subic Bay was much clearer than Jim's. David remembered hearing rock n' roll music and named hits by groups like Tony Orlando and Sam the Sham and the Pharo's. David spent more time at Subic Bay than Jim and provided specific details about

everyday social life for U.S. sailors in the Philippines. His memories and observations of sound were not as specific as Jim's, perhaps due to the differences in their individual naval training. My conversation with David challenged me to listen obliquely to his experiences. Although I framed many of my questions around sound and listening, David took advantage of our unstructured conversation and used my questions as departure points to describe a huge range of topics and experiences. I benefitted from hearing David's sonic experiences, but I found his other anecdotes as important. He told me about things about Subic Bay I never heard or read about, and his perspective brought Subic Bay to life for me in ways other sources did not. Comments and quotations from Jim and David are found throughout the following chapters. Their personal recollections corroborated and refuted official military archival sources I read. Talking with Jim and David challenged me to engage more closely with theories and methodologies emerging from sound studies.

Teresia Teaiwa wrote how militarism "is a phenomenon that distressingly "bleeds" across formal boundaries," how it is a force "that is not contained by military institutions, but one which seeps into much more fundamental aspects of social and cultural life."⁴⁰ In describing the fluid nature of militarism, Teaiwa argued that successful criticism and analyses of military systems needed equally malleable methodologies and approaches. Echoing Cynthia Enloe, Teaiwa suggested that a gender studies approach could be a useful analytical tool for studying the effects of militarism, because gender studies snakes through and across intellectual and disciplinary boundaries. I think Teaiwa's call for a flexible methodology to study secretive or opaque subjects and forces such as militarism is correct – whether that lens is through gender, or through sound.

Like Teaiwa, ethnomusicologist Christine Balance wrote about finding and using the right methodologies. In her efforts to counteract assumptions and narratives that depict Filipino musicians as natural musical mimics, and masters of rendition, Balance argued for *disobedient listening*, “a method that aims to denaturalize tropes surrounding Filipinos’ relationship to U.S. popular music.”⁴¹ Balance explains that disobedient listening can help to “recalibrate our default settings” to “unsettle dominant discourses on race, performance, and U.S. popular music.”⁴² In introducing this methodology, Balance champions a perspective that allows her to critique narratives about Filipino musicians by identifying the racial politics present within the sonic, and she disrupts the ocular dominance within Philippine Studies. A disobedient listener is a contrarian who questions master narratives, someone who pokes and prods at hierarchies to find the gaps and the weak spots – the places where assumptions and biases create rickety intellectual scaffolding. Teaiwa and Balance both critique systems of U.S. power by looking to the margins and the spaces in-between narratives. I draw on their examples, concepts, and strategies as I address the challenge of studying the behemoth that is the 20th century U.S. Military. I listen and read naval texts disobediently, in ways

Christine Ehrick brings together the strains of sound and gender analysis to history and questions their “isolation from one another.” She reminds us how gender analysis changed how historians asked questions and studied hierarchies – arguing that sound does the same. Ehrick pushes forward, challenging us to think about “the ways sound may be gendered and gender sounded.”⁴³ Ehrick research focuses on the relationship between female voices and radio broadcasting, specifically “the possibilities and limits for women’s radio speech” and how sound is gendered.⁴⁴ Her emphasis on how sound is gendered is a

useful reminder that sound doesn't exist in isolation – it coils around politics, gender, race, geography, and culture. David Suisman makes this point, writing that, “sound has power and is woven into a host of other social, political, and economic power relations.”⁴⁵ A sonic-exclusive interpretation of history isn't a solution if it means replacing one analytical category with another. This is one of the failings of sound studies: the field's inability to transcend the novelty of the sonic put the interpretive possibilities of intersectionality to the margins of the discipline. To critique and interpret through sound demands the researcher to engage with the swirl of forces attached to the sonic world.

I want to present another methodological tool in counterpoint to Teaiwa, Balance, Ehrick, Schafer, Daughtry, and Feld, a way to hear and represent historically silent sounds, places, systems, and individuals. With this approach I try to overcome the challenge of what Schafer calls *schizophonia*, the jittery “splitting of sound from their original contexts.”⁴⁶ The sounds of the past and their sources are gone, split, and silent. How do we hear the past in the present without recordings? My methodology and approach for this research is what I call *oblique listening*, a method that builds on Feld's *aconstemology*, Teaiwa's disciplinary fluidity, Balance's *disobedient listening*, Ehrick's intersectionality, and Daughtry's *belliphonic*. Oblique listening was a method that I used with both textual and ethnographic sources. For example: I learned during interviews that asking directly about sound or music did not lead to a dynamic conversation. It was more useful asking Jim and David, the two veterans I with whom I talked, to reminisce about the events and moments that made an impression on them in the Philippines. Jim, David, and I all preferred unstructured interviews. Their recollections sometimes mentioned noises or silences, but I usually inferred obliquely about

the presence and impact of sound. I learned how Americans acted and sounded in the Philippines from a story about Shore Patrol personnel arresting sailors for fighting and shouting. They were loud, drunk, rude, and disruptive. In contrast, when I asked about specific songs or bands or performances, I got a few names but not much else. It is challenging to ask about past sonic experiences because listening is second nature and sounds ubiquitous; we do not always register or attach importance to sounds that become routine parts of our lives. Memory is fickle and is best treated with caution.

My process for reading sound in text was the same. The Navy documented seemingly everything, but I rarely found direct references to the impact of sound. Instead of searching for sound specifically, I read and listened obliquely. A series of reports about illegal logging crews within the naval reservation's boundaries, at first appeared divorced from anything sound related. I learned later that one of the Navy's solutions to deal with these illicit activities was to bomb the logging trails. Although the Navy documented no concern about the sonic fallout of the bombings, the reports took on new meaning for me. The story of these logging trails was full of sound – different voices debating courses of action, vehicles delivering the bombs, the ensuing explosions and physical destruction, and the experience of the loggers and the nearby community hearing American ordinance destroying Philippine land.

A Brief History of Subic Bay

Referring to “Subic Bay” can be confusing. There are several places in Zamabales Province, Philippines that share the name. Subic Bay is a large bay located on the Western coast of Luzon, the northern island of the Philippine archipelago. Located northwest of

Manila, Subic is smaller than Manila Bay and never saw the level of shipping traffic as in Manila. Subic is also a town north of Subic Bay. Subic Bay was also the name of the U.S. Naval Reservation located along the shore of bay. When I use “Subic” and “Subic Bay” I mean the naval reservation which included the air station, the naval station, and other command units within the overall complex. U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay was an approximately 262 square mile naval reservation located on the Southeastern point of Zambales province in the Philippines. Although most of its physical infrastructure sat along the water’s edge, the base’s borders extended inland into the jungle and mountain terrain around the bay. At its largest, the naval reservation encompassed approximately 26,000 water acres and 36,000 land acres. The base also shared a border with Olongapo City, which in the mid-twentieth century was a city of 60,000 people that continued to grow in the following decades. Olongapo was legally a part of the U.S. naval station after World War II and remained under American jurisdiction until 1959. After Olongapo obtained its independence from the United States its culture, economics, and politics remained connected with Subic Bay’s growth. The sounds of U.S. sailors, civilians, and military infrastructures defined the histories of Subic Bay and Olongapo City.

To arrive at a sound history of Naval Base, Subic Bay during the 1950s and 1960s requires a brief historical detour through pre- and post-World War II U.S.-Philippine relations, beginning in the 1890s. Spain possessed the Philippines as a colony for over three hundred years (1521-1898), positioning the islands as a vital node in Spain’s Pacific trade route between New Spain and China. The Spanish-American War (1898) determined the future of the Philippines, as Spanish colonial rule withered around the globe. Growing with

victory, the United States acquired the Philippines in addition to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Guam from Spain. Fighting and instability, however, persisted in the Philippines following the negotiations between the U.S. and Spain. Competing Filipino factions and U.S. troops fought in the Philippine-American War (1898-1902). The seemingly precise periodization suggests that both wars resolved cleanly with round, even dates; this framing, however, fails to account for continued Philippine resistance after 1902. Many scholars of the Philippines place the Philippine-American War in a longer continuum, concluding in 1913. Other scholars distinguish between the Philippine-American War (1898-1902) and the War of Philippine Resistance (1902-1913).⁴⁷ Either chronology finds the U.S. in control of the Philippine Islands after a violent suppression of Filipino forces by the U.S. Army that left thousands of Filipinos dead.

Rather than absorbing the Philippines as a new state, the U.S. retained the Philippines as a territory under U.S. civilian- and military-led governments to implement President McKinley's "benevolent assimilation" doctrine. U.S. investments in Philippine health, economic, education infrastructures were to uplift the Philippines into a mature, modern, self-governing nation. The U.S. hoped to remake their "little brown brothers" into their own image. A colony in all but name to assuage the American public against claims of American imperialism (branded instead, as expansionism), U.S. leaders carefully curated the image of the U.S.-Philippine relations. The Philippines remained a U.S. colonial possession until 1946 (originally 1944 but delayed by World War II), when the Philippines gained its independence. A decade earlier, the U.S. granted the Philippines a series of political concessions that gestured toward complete Filipino autonomy, fulfilling the terms of the

Tydings-McDuffe Act, also known as the Philippine Independence Act (1934). With partial self-rule in place, Filipinos adopted the Constitution of the Philippines (1935) and established the Commonwealth of the Philippines, a transitional government. Filipinos also gained the right to directly elect the President of the Philippines; Filipinos elected Manuel L. Quezon as the first president in 1935. Despite these changes, the U.S. colonial infrastructure remained intact, and Filipinos struggled to define their legal identity, and many continued to push for complete autonomy.

The Philippines was not spared from war as conflict spread across the globe in the 1930s and 1940s. The Japanese Military invaded the Philippines on December 8, 1941 and defeated combined American and Philippine resistance and forced the U.S. Asiatic Fleet away from its home port. The Japanese invasion of the Philippines occurred in tandem with the attack at Pearl Harbor, a set of calculated attacks meant to destroy the American naval presence in the Pacific. With the U.S. Fleet in the Philippines crippled and dispersed, Japan was free to expand its military presence unimpeded throughout Southeast Asia. Competing interests in the Pacific between the United States and Japan concerned both nations. The Washington Naval Conference (1921-1922) briefly resolved tensions in the Pacific; the United States, Great Britain, and Japan agreed to a fixed ratio of naval power in the Pacific.⁴⁸ Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, its subsequent departure from the conference's terms in 1936, and war with China in 1937, however, led to increased tensions and a new buildup of U.S. naval power in the Pacific.

The Philippines remained under Japanese military occupation until 1945. After several years of Japanese rule, the American military returned to the Philippines in 1944 in a

series of famous U.S. Naval battles and amphibious landings around the archipelago. The official close of the war coincided with the already planned changes in Philippine sovereignty. On July 4, 1946, under the Treaty of General Relations and Protocol – or, the Treaty of Manila – the Philippines gained complete independence from the United States. One year later in 1947, the U.S. and the Philippines signed the Military Bases Agreement Act, granting the U.S. nearly unrestricted use of several major military installations in the Philippines: Naval Base, Subic Bay, Clark Air Base, John Hay Air Station, Naval Communication Station, San Miguel, and Wallace Air Station, in addition to Naval Station, Sangley Point in Manila Bay.⁴⁹

Subic Bay took on new importance for U.S. military leaders in the wake of the Korean War and U.S. concerns over the spread communism in Southeast Asia. Although a shell of its future physical scale, the base was logistically important during the Korean War. Branded as a new beginning, this period of U.S.-Philippine relations was in fact, a delayed ending. Although the U.S. and the Philippines entered the postwar landscape of the 1950s as allies, their relationship was still defined by an unreconciled history of colonialism. The U.S. Navy remained in the Philippines on borrowed time, and every concession and negotiation left them with less power and influence. The U.S. Navy resisted Philippine demands throughout the 1950s, as the U.S. and the U.S. pushed for further expansion of U.S. influence in Asia.

The diplomatic tone changed between the United States and in the Philippines. U.S. diplomats embedded that tone in the language of the 1947 Military Bases Agreement Act which structured the military relationship at Subic Bay until the base's closure in the early

1990s. The document contains phrases such as “mutual security,” “common defense,” “mutual interests,” “mutual protection,” “military necessity,” and “international security.”⁵⁰ The message is clear. The United States and the Philippines are allies. Maybe even equals. They share goals, security concerns, and economic interests. They are partners. This intimate tone between the U.S. and the Philippines was a change from previous decades of U.S. control and colonization. A moment of historical amnesia, many Filipinos and Americans felt that “liberator” overwrote “colonizer.” Popular opinions, attitudes, and rhetoric ignored or suppressed decades of political, economic, cultural, and military inequalities. The Philippines was now secure, safe, and soon-to-be independent, thanks to the United States. The bases the U.S. left behind were to be conflict deterrents, physical symbols of strength, security, and unity.

Many scholars critiqued this narrative. Denise Cruz writes that “the cold war reeducation of the American public” through “rhetorical turns to the heart and the family” clouded memories of violence and occupation, while also warding off challenges to real and imagined U.S. neocolonial intentions.⁵¹ She argues that the U.S. narrative weakened Filipino efforts to claim ownership of their shared history with the U.S., and neglected the impact of labor and education reform led by new generations of Filipino women in the postwar years. For many Filipinos, a change in name did not equate to a change in equality or in equity. Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez noted the longevity of U.S.-Philippine postwar historical amnesia. After reviewing a museum display on U.S.-Philippine relations at former Clark Air Base in the early 2000s, she observed how the exhibit framed the history of the two nations “through a Cold War lens of uplift and united struggle rather than of violence and

domination.”⁵² Gonzalez writes how this exhibit adapted the Cold War tone of cooperation to the entirety of U.S.-Philippine history, and therefore justified U.S. colonial goals of benevolent assimilation. The tacit message suggests that without U.S. intervention, the Philippines would not have developed. Like Cruz, Gonzalez shows how easy it is to reframe history from one perspective.

Despite the Navy and the Marine Corp’s great push across the Pacific, at the close of World War II the U.S. did not maintain a strong presence in the region. Naval historian Edward Marolda outlined how the Truman administration emptied the U.S. armed forces from a strength of 10 million to less than one, and reduced the 10,000 ships in the U.S. fleet to several hundred.⁵³ Marolda also described how the tone in Washington turned against the Navy and towards the Air Force and long-range bombers. Air Force proponents argued that air power obviated the need for naval power. Combined with a leadership focused on Europe, U.S. Naval security, personnel, and other readiness concerns were not subjected to serious scrutiny.⁵⁴

U.S. postwar base planners worked on responses to an anticipated future war, a war dominated by air power and long-range weapons. Serious planning began in 1941 under President Roosevelt’s direction and soon involved several high-ranking military and civilian officials within the White House, the Department of War, and the Department of State. U.S. military planners worried that “the oceans would no longer offer the protection and time for preparation as they had in the past.”⁵⁵ While the Joint Security Council and the Army Air Corps developed a series of postwar base plans, the Navy did not begin its own process of selecting bases until 1944. As new technologies changed warfare and collapsed meanings of

time and space, American postwar base planners suggested that a larger military with a wide presence around the globe would ensure American security. U.S. investments in air power also happened in the Philippines. One result was three U.S. Naval Air Bases closing in the Philippines. The closures gestured to both the reduced postwar budget and the emphasis placed on air power rather than naval power.

Although officials across U.S. government departments agreed that overseas bases were essential to postwar American security, they differed on how to acquire basing rights. Some military leaders suggested the United States take what it needed, while State Department officials insisted on acquiring base rights through official diplomatic negotiations. The military leveraged its most valuable resource to influence negotiations: manpower. Elliott Converse describes that, “In practice, after the war the United States routinely held troops in place as a lever to assist American diplomats in their bargaining for postwar military and commercial rights.”⁵⁶ The military establishment hoped to intimidate other nations into agreements favorable to the United States. Military leaders did not worry about the political and diplomatic consequences of leaving troops behind. High-ranking military officials, who outranked their civilian counterparts, disproportionately influenced the debate over U.S. investments in postwar basing strategies.

When Dwight D. Eisenhower began his first presidential term in 1952, he put in motion a change of course for U.S. defense policies. His “New Look” policy, born of his career in the Army, called for fiscal responsibility and accountability in concert with military power. The centerpiece of the “New Look” was reducing the overall defense budget, with the bulk of the remaining funds diverted to developing nuclear arms. In 1953, “immediately

after taking office he began a series of sharp cuts in the defense budget, achieved mainly by reducing the number of troops under arms.”⁵⁷ The Korean War (1950-1953), however, changed the Truman administration’s global and military policies. The decreased U.S. forces and materials immediately after World War II left the United States in a passive position at the onset of the Korean War. There were not enough service members, transports, and supplies available for an effective and immediate counterattack.

The United States faced a complicated situation in the Philippines in the immediate post-war years. With an independent Philippines confirmed as a loyal ally by 1947, the United States held a strategic military foothold in Southeast Asia and the broader Western Pacific. However, the stability of the Philippines was not assured, as competing political factions wrestled for power in the new state. The new Philippine government forced The Hukbalahap, a peasant army that fought a guerilla war against the Japanese during the occupation, to disband after the war. They refused to stand down, however, and continued to wield influence in the rural agrarian and mountain provinces in Luzon, the northern island, and waged a new guerilla war against Republic of the Philippine forces. U.S. leaders worried concerned that continued instability in the Philippines would undermine the agreements arranged between the U.S. and the Philippines. The conflict shaped the 1946 presidential election between Manuel Roxas and Sergio Osmena. The Huk’s threw their support behind the Philippine communist party, finding a shared cause in worker’s rights. The Huk alliance with the Philippine Communist party, however, was its ultimate undoing because it demonstrated to U.S. and Philippine leaders that a communist insurgency was

possible in the Philippines. The Huks rebranded in 1950 and called themselves the People's Liberation Army which further alarmed officials in Washington and Manila.

This brief overview of pre- and post-war U.S.-Philippine history contextualizes the issues and settings I write about. Subic Bay's history of hosting U.S. sailors, the legacies of colonialism, Cold War-era geopolitical concerns, and the impact of World War II provide the backdrop to sound influenced and structured life at the base. The 1950s and 1960s were decades of military and diplomatic transitions between the United States and the Philippines, and the years immediately preceding set the terms for those changes. As the two nations navigated their post war relationship, many of the tensions and challenges affecting that relationship manifested in the way Subic Bay and Olongapo City sounded. From apocalyptic naval bombardments, to construction projects, and a reinvigorated music scene, sound marked cultural change at Subic Bay and Olongapo City. The people living within Naval Base, Subic Bay's sphere of influence also acted on the base's acoustemology, and individual Americans and Filipinos sensed and made sense of the changes happening around them by listening. U.S. Naval culture, industry, infrastructure, and bureaucracy wielded immense influence over Subic Bay's sound spaces, but so did the people who lived on and off the base – the sailors, politicians, wives, prostitutes, street vendors, attorneys, children, musicians, dancers, singers, and artists.

Dissertation Structure

My dissertation is in five chapters. Chapter I introduces the background of this project – the themes, methodologies, theories, intellectual heritage, and processes I used to research and write. It also contains an overview of U.S.-Philippine history and geopolitics to

contextualize the following chapters. Chapters II, III, and IV, form the core of the dissertation, and each presents a close description and analysis of sonic spaces, events, and experiences at Subic Bay during the 1960s. Chapter II focuses on what I call the industrial sonic emissions of the base, the sounds of the base's industrial infrastructure and how those sounds structured and influenced life collectively on and off base. Chapter III addresses the suburban culture and family life at overseas military bases, and the music and radio culture at Subic Bay. I focus on the lives of military wives and families and their roles in structuring base life and the presence of sound around them, and I introduce the framework of military-sonic domesticity. Chapter IV is about the sonic and political relationship between the naval base and its immediate neighbor Olongapo City. I focus on the nightlife industries of the city that catered to U.S. sailors on liberty. In Chapter V, I reflect on the larger themes and consequences of studying U.S. militarism, politics, and sound. I ask questions about occupation, culture, geography, militarism, politics, and security. I connect these concepts and forces to sound and demonstrate their links.

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Although I write about the U.S. Navy's history at Subic Bay as a critical humanist, I also have a personal relationship with the U.S. military. My wife is an active duty Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps, deployed in Iraq during the period I wrote this dissertation. I live with my wife on a military base, Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, CA. In many ways the Marine Corps structures my life. I live in military housing, have military healthcare, and interact with service members. Press releases and announcements from the DoD have taken on greater importance to me since I married, and I worry about war in ways I never did

before. Instead of a deluge of self-reflexive auto-ethnography in this introduction, I include a series of vignettes at the end of each chapter that will provide insight into my life as an emic and etic military researcher, writer, critic, and spouse. These vignettes provide insight into my research process and how I conceived my fieldwork space. Because this dissertation is a history, my field is extinct. I cannot go to Naval Base, Subic Bay as a real-time participant observer. The Subic Bay that I write about in the following chapters no longer exists apart from its outline in the ground, the skeletal remains of buildings left behind, and the memories held by people who lived or visited there. My field was instead the military archives I visited. The field was also the military base and military community I was part of during my project. Living at Camp Pendleton and experiencing the culture, sights, and sounds of the base influenced my writing, analysis, and how I thought about being in the field.

Endnotes

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² R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: The Tuning of the World* (Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books, 1977), 77.

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¹⁴ There are exceptions. See: Karin Bisjerveld, *Mechanical Sound: Technology, Culture, and Public Problems of Noise in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), Alain Corbin, *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the 19th Century French Countryside*, translated by Martin Thom (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Columbia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), Derek Vaillant, "Peddling Noise: Contesting the Civic Soundscape of Chicago, 1890-1913." *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 96, No. 3 (Autumn 2003), 257-287.

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Chapter II: Military-Industrial Sonic Emissions

Sounds, Infrastructures, and Materials

Like the city of Olongapo and suburban-domestic residential areas on base, the industrial infrastructure at Subic Bay formed an important part of the social and sonic latticework that structured base life. Subic Bay was a massive industrial hub for the U.S. Navy in the Pacific. The U.S. Navy depended on physical infrastructure and raw materials to sustain logistic and training activities at Subic Bay. The base's industrial output was part of complex economy within the base, the Philippines, and connected to larger U.S. global-military supply chain systems. Its main purpose was to produce, consume, and repair ships in the U.S. Seventh Fleet. The industrial workshops of Subic Bay, located along the wharfs and piers abetting the bay itself, were powered by the base's supporting infrastructural systems – power grids, pipelines, roads, wires, and generators. This second layer of industrial production also relied on human labor by Americans and Filipinos to sustain the conditions necessary for the ship repair facilities.

The Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964 changed the role of the U.S. military in Vietnam and the status of industrial sound and production at Subic Bay. In response to events in the off the coast of Vietnam, President Johnson committed U.S. ground troops to fight, leading to the first of several waves of combat troop level increases. 1964 was the pivot year for American involvement in the Vietnam War, and it was also the moment Subic Bay was transformed from a Pacific outpost to an essential logistics hub. In December 1965, the Navy estimated its increases in its consumption and output between pre-Tonkin levels and

then-current levels. In one year, between 1964 and 1965, Subic Bay experienced increases in: fuel consumption (300%), radio broadcasts (100%), ships in port (60%), aircraft repairs and maintenance (1100%), Navy personnel in transit (350%), freight loading (200%), ammunition handling (1600%), and ship repair workloads (60%).⁵⁸ These were titanic changes to daily life and the command structure at Subic Bay. The increase in support activities is even more stunning considering that active duty Navy personnel increased by only 20%.⁵⁹ This meant there were more ships, and more activities Subic Bay in the same limited space with a disproportionate increase in manpower. Although there were new and ongoing construction projects within the Naval Reservation in conjunction with the increased industrial output, these additions did not cover the Navy's actual needs at Subic Bay.

I use the terms industrial and infrastructure throughout this chapter – as individual terms *industrial* and *infrastructure*, and as the combination *industrial infrastructure*. Industrial refers to the conditions, spaces, and products that relate to industry, including the processing, production, supply, and distribution of materials and goods. The industrial areas of Subic Bay, for example, featured machine shops, supply depots, and warehouses – sites of production, storage, and distribution. Infrastructure is more complicated. Like the industrial, capitalism defines infrastructure. Bruce Robbins writes that, “Capitalism is often conceived as a shiny display of more or less desirable commodities. The inverse of this vision, infrastructure belongs to capitalism as well – it makes possible the production and distribution of these commodities.”⁶⁰ He argues that, “unlike commodities, infrastructure is the object of no one's desire”: it is “not artfully illuminated in a shop window,” and “often

inaccessible.”⁶¹ Robbins describes infrastructure as the skeletal polarity to the “shiny display” of commodities, the functional devices and systems that make production and consumption possible. At Subic Bay, the fuel pipelines, electrical wiring, and water systems were the infrastructural skeleton that powered the industrial ship repair complexes. The infrastructures I address include production systems that enabled Subic Bay to function and fulfill its logistic purpose, rather than social and other kinds of institutional hierarchies that structured the base. Infrastructures are complicated because they are products and producers of capital; they can be self-contained industrial units like a blacksmith shop and can be the power sources that fuel industrial production. Industry and infrastructure shared a reciprocal relationship at Subic Bay and led to an ancillary infrastructure of sound.

I describe the relationship between sound, industry, and infrastructure, and I focus on three aspects of industrial and infrastructural life at Subic Bay: the materials, the sounds, and the labor. I introduce the term *industrial sonic emissions* to describe the collection of intersecting sounds produced by Subic Bay’s industrial infrastructures. Studies about the power and politics of infrastructure are increasingly common in the humanities, and music scholars now lean towards this critical intervention. Scholars in the past two decades, notably in anthropology, have made the study of infrastructure relevant and have argued that infrastructures complicate and enrich histories of capital, politics, space, and temporality.⁶² I write about industrial sonic emissions in dialogue with scholars in music, media, and anthropology who have treated infrastructure critically. Anthropologist Brian Larkin urged scholars to engage with infrastructure ethnographically, and emphasizes that infrastructures exist in a continuum of visual gradations, between the visible and the invisible: “Invisibility is

certainly one aspect of infrastructure, but is only one and at the extreme edge of a range of visibilities that move from unseen to grand spectacles and everything in between.”⁶³ Larkin describes a visibility spectrum of infrastructure and suggests that the physicality of these systems informs how humans engage with, study, and understand such structures. I argue there is a corresponding range of *sonic* perceptibility matching the visibility spectrum Larkin describes. Where infrastructure is invisible it may also be unheard, a subtle presence such as a water heater humming in the background, underground, or behind closed doors.

Infrastructure may also be loud and present. It could be a visible generator with its collection of knobs, wires, and pipes that clamor, bang, and throb. Nicole Starosielski also gestures to the visible and audible degrees of infrastructure and tries to “[make] visible the materiality of the wired world.”⁶⁴ As infrastructure becomes visible it may also become audible.

Writing in counterpoint to anthropologists and media studies scholars, music scholar Kyle Devine called for a political ecology of music, an approach to music studies to “study how the stuff of musical culture is made and possessed, dispossessed and unmade.”⁶⁵ For Devine, a political ecology of music widens the scope of what scholars consider part of the music industry – not just the physical recordings, but the “whole economy of raw materials and supply chains that undergirds what is traditionally called the recording industry.”⁶⁶

Devine’s push for a broader study of the music industry’s economic and infrastructural systems connects to Larkin’s argument for treating infrastructure and materials ethnographically. Devine and Larkin call attention to structures in the background that construct place and industry, but also to the factors that govern those background forces. Penny Harvey and Hannah Knox also target infrastructure as critical humanists, arguing that

studying infrastructures can expand how the study of history, geography, and state power. They write about how “roads work as scaling devices, whereby we find state power in test tubes and measuring tapes, and global capital in the confrontation over the ownership of scrappy bits of land with contested histories.”⁶⁷ They describe how the materials of road building carry and project state power and the weight of global capitalism; test tubes, machinery, and measuring tapes are not passive objects but vital pieces of a contested political ecology. What do the sounds of infrastructure say about a political ecology?

Anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing argues that material assemblages can expand the study of political economy. Tsing writes that the open-ended nature of disparate assemblages “allow us to ask about communal effects without assuming them,” and that assemblages “cannot hide from capital and the state; they are sites for watching how political economy works.”⁶⁸ For Tsing, studying gathered assemblages in a community or system simultaneously as a collected whole and individual strains can reveal obscured scales of time and space that were swallowed up in the assembling of the whole. Tsing writes that “assemblages don’t just gather lifeways; they make them.”⁶⁹ Tsing uses this framework to comment on the matsutake mushroom industry and the diverse Asian American labor force in the Pacific Northwest engaged in the hunt for these specialty mushrooms. Tsing works backward from the mushroom and focuses on the varied backgrounds and motivations of these mushroom gatherers. She shows readers that it matters who these people are, where they come from, and why they do this work – their stories and experiences converging into a coherent narrative whole. Like Devine, Tsing argues that peripheral forces are important to the composition of a core system *and* exist as unique microorganisms, with their own

“temporal rhythms.”⁷⁰ In dialogue with Tsing, anthropologist Nikhil Anand in *Hydraulic City* also writes about material assemblages, and argues that the many assemblages of water infrastructures tangle with how city leaders organize modern liberal cities and citizenships. He describes how “infrastructure is a living, breathing, leaking assemblage of more-than-human relations.”⁷¹ Like Devine and Tsing, Anand draws attention to the pieces that comprise the whole; he shows that infrastructure is a pulsing organism, expanding and contracting, heaving and sighing as pipes, screws, and wires settle and groan, as humans and nonhumans forge relationships with these vital systems and with each other.

Devine, Tsing, and Anand use an expanded scope of infrastructure and materials to focus on the political ecologies and economies of the recording industry, matsutake mushrooms, and urban water politics. To record platters, mushrooms, and water, I add the sonic materiality of military industry, specifically the historic sonic totality of those assembled industrial tools, machines, and materials at Subic Bay. I ask: how do sound and infrastructure relate to one another? How is place constructed through sound, through industry, through infrastructure, and through the sounds of industrial infrastructure? Through an oblique listening approach to industrial sonic emissions in U.S. naval records, I address the political ecology of sound at Subic Bay. I examine two levels of background materials: infrastructure *and* sound. I locate sound in infrastructure and infrastructure in sound. Further complicating my approach is the historical distance between my writing and the sonic culture of Subic Bay in the 1950s and 1960s.

Industrial Sonic Emissions

To describe industrial military sounds, I deploy the term *industrial sonic emissions*.

Industrial sonic emissions are the mass of sounds produced by industrial infrastructure. They are sounds from disparate but adjacent sources that converge into a sonic force that pushes out into the surrounding environments. Sonic emissions are the collective sounds of materials. A focus on industrial sonic emissions provide analytical access to the sounds of materials, the sources of those sounds, and the ontology of sonic material. Industrial sounds and materials that stem from military industrial production are part of a political ecology of sound, a riff on Devine's political ecology of music. In the political ecology of industrial sonic emissions, the sonic footprint of military production is a collection of individual sonic, material, and human strains placed into an ecological orbit to form an uninterrupted whole. Industrial sonic emissions address relationships between people, industry, infrastructure, and space, and describe how intersecting waves of sound inform acoustemological worldviews.

Industrial sonic emissions also relate to concepts generated by Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut: the sonic *leakage effect* and *perforations*. Leakage effects "occur when an activity in one area expands unexpectedly into another area, setting in motion a second process, project, or concern," and, cause "an unforeseen act of translation or transference."⁷² Stanyek and Piekut describe how in a studio setting, sonic leakages occur when a microphone picks up sound waves of a different instrument, and from leaks between the recording booth and the engineering room. *Perforations*, meanwhile, are how "flows can traverse obstacles through certain well-defined openings." The perforation "controls and focuses flows between two spaces but maintains separation between them."⁷³ Perforations in

industrial space generated the mass of industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay, which created a leakage effect. This was common in the industrial dock areas, where the sounds of machine repair shops escaped through perforations like open windows, doors, vents, or pipes. Sonic emissions differ from leakages and perforations: the latter terms address the specific, micro-context of microphones and soundproofing in a recording studio, whereas sonic emissions express a massive industrial scale.

Stanyek and Piekut introduced these terms to comment on musical cultures under late capitalism. They reflected on intersections of capital, technology, and labor, and argued that the excesses of late capitalism make everyone hyper-productive – the living *and* the dead. Their goal was to “consider the recombinatorial sonics of intermundane collaboration.”⁷⁴ Industrial sonic emissions relate to the technologies of the intermundane but ignore the interplay between the living and the dead. Sonic emissions make audible the capitalist and social infrastructure of Subic Bay’s industry and economy, and the relationship between sound, space, and stuff. Sonic emissions follow Tsing’s argument that material assemblages demonstrate how “gatherings sometimes become ‘happenings,’ that is, greater than the sum of their parts.”⁷⁵ In the case of industrial sonic emissions, the mass of industrial sound became a structural force greater than the sum of the individual industrial spaces and laborers producing their isolated units of sound.

Industrial sonic emissions also relate to other kinds of environmental emissions like air pollutants. Sonic emissions at Subic Bay were not born exclusively from controlled sound spaces like a recording studio, but were raw and feral, spilling out from their points of origin. The scale of sonic emissions means that control over them can be a futile endeavor.

Industrial sonic emissions can be present at any type of industrial site, and are found in the *belliphonic*, on and off the battlefield. When Martin Daughtry describes the collective sounds of the generators that powered the U.S. military occupation of Iraq, what he calls the “industrialized soundscape,” he describes industrial sonic emissions.⁷⁶ The generators supported American combat troops by powering camps and installations throughout Iraq. The generators were also used by Iraqi civilians who depended on such supplementary infrastructures because the U.S. invasion ruptured Iraqi supply and infrastructural systems. As Daughtry points out, the sound of the generators became a familiar keynote sound for Iraqis, for whom the drones of the generators came to symbolize the American sonic and military occupation of Iraq. Americans and Filipinos also developed a political understanding of and relationship to industrialized sounds and materials decades earlier in the Philippines.

While industrial sonic emissions can be blunt, invasive, or intrusive forces, they can also become part of the scenery – familiar, nonthreatening, and structural. Jonathan Sterne described this process as *sonorial* circulation, when “music becomes a form of architecture.”⁷⁷ Sterne explains how music in shopping malls fills *and* creates infrastructure and environment. He writes that, “rather than simply filling up an empty space, the music becomes part of the consistency of that space. The sound becomes a presence, and as that presence it becomes an essential part of the building’s infrastructure.”⁷⁸ Sterne argues that as sound fills space it assumes a new ontology in relation to its surroundings, and to the listener’s acceptance of that sound’s presence. The music piped into shopping malls creates a *friendly* consumer experience to make shoppers more comfortable and more willing to spend money. The music ceases to be a distinct component of the shopping mall and becomes indistinguishable

from the overall mall aesthetic, producing an audible infrastructure. Industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay functioned in a similar manner. At the microlevel of shop floors, industrial sounds formed part of the shop's culture and environment – each shop did different work with different tools – while at the macro level, the convergence of industrial sound blended into a larger structural sonic emission that characterized that section of the base and the communities around it.

Industrial sonic emissions at military bases also relate to Mark Gillem's categories of military base spillover. Gillem identified four categories of spillover: "clamor, calamity, contamination, and crime."⁷⁹ Gillem's "clamor" corresponds to sonic emissions; both terms express how military sounds defy the physical limits of the bases that house them. Industrial sonic emissions link to sonic leakages, and to Gillem's spillover of clamor: the three concepts identify how sound is not bound easily, that its fluid nature ensures that sounds reverberate beyond their sources, through and across space and time. This also means that sonic emissions are more difficult to measure and document than other kinds of military emissions. Experts can take soil readings to measure chemical pollution; police blotters and crime reports can be synthesized to create metrics; and the Navy documented ways that the base's land changed through construction. How to measure the sonic? Disregard for sound's cultural and political impact on service members and on host nations, communities, and people drove the Navy's lack of urgency regarding sound measurements.

The human relationship with the infrastructures that power a community or a military base is symbiotic. Sound helps to facilitate the human-infrastructure relationship. Stanyek and Piekut write that "humanly made sounds are never devoid of bodies, and there

is no body that isn't constituted through sonic formations.”⁸⁰ Locating human involvement is one of the challenges when writing about infrastructure or the sounds of infrastructure. Contributing to this problem is how certain sounds and forms of infrastructure go unheard, remain veiled or concealed. Exposing the rust, grease, mold, leaks, tears, breaks, screeches, and squeaks of infrastructure reveals the human cost in maintaining those systems and their imperfections. The greasy coveralls of a maintenance worker or the hiss of a gas leak ruin the illusion that hidden infrastructures convey to the world: that they are infallible, invisible, and silent. This is the underside of infrastructure and what Christina Schwenkel writes about in her critique of the “technopolitics of visibility,” when technocrats wield the visibility of technology for political aims and to express modernity located in “spectacular infrastructure.”⁸¹ Schwenkel argues that when the enchantment with infrastructure fades and ruin and decay set in, infrastructure reveals the necessity of maintenance, the reality of construction flaws, and how the labor of maintenance is both gendered and racialized.⁸² Maintenance and management of the infrastructures at Subic Bay also depended on laborers and on their ability to know through sound whether things were functioning correctly.

Piers, Ships, and Shops

Subic Bay was a support installation for the U.S. Seventh Fleet, and Navy planners arranged the base's industrial infrastructure along the bay's shorelines to service arriving ships and boats. The strip of industrial shops shared a border with Olongapo City and was a distinct sound space of the base. The industrial infrastructure located there were organized and overseen through a combination of command units and officers: the Director of Base Industrial Relations, the Naval Control of Shipping Officer, the Port Services Officer, Civil

Engineer, along with the supply and logistic division.⁸³ Subic Bay's Public Works Center (PWC), under the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), also mediated industrial sonic emissions throughout the base. The PWC's mission was to "provide public works, public utilities and transportation support," which included "architectural, structural, mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering" consultations and services.⁸⁴ The PWC along with above mentioned command units was responsible for the machines, materials, and people that manipulated materials and generated industrial sounds.

One of the hubs for industrial sound within the industrial-material command structure at Subic Bay was the U.S. Naval Supply Depot (NSD). The Navy commissioned the depot in 1955, "in connection with a general expansion of facilities and activities in the Subic Bay area."⁸⁵ By the late 1960s, as U.S. combat operations in Vietnam continued, Subic Bay's NSD became "the Navy's No. 1 Depot for logistic support to the 7th Fleet and the 1st Marine Air Wing."⁸⁶ The expanding role of Naval supply at Subic Bay brought changes to supply sounds and infrastructure. The Navy upgraded the supply command from supply department to supply depot and new and larger facilities were needed to support the growing supply unit. To accommodate the increased importance of the supply division, the base command moved the supply depot receiving terminal and storage complex away from the main industrial piers to a more central location with more storage space. The new location was almost equidistant between the main industrial areas, the Naval Station administration, and Cubi Point. The location had space for extensive supply facilities and became a new sonic and logistics nexus on base. Although transplanted for storage reasons, the depot's new location affected spatial concerns about the original department's proximity to the naval

reservation's boundaries.⁸⁷ The depot's original location was closer to Olongapo City, and the border with non-naval territory raised concerns about security of the base's supply logistics and materials and indirectly about the impact and culture of industrial sonic emissions. The move created a new industrial soundscape.

The map and images below of the NSD show the new central location of the supply depot. The location split the distance between the main repair hub at Subic and the air station at Cubi Point. The aerial photographs were taken from different vantage points and show the open spaces of the base's interior compared to the more congested areas towards the civilian areas and Olongapo City off base. By moving the supply depot away from the base's borders to a more central location with more space, Navy leadership at Subic Bay ensured that continued growth at Subic could be supported logistically. They hoped the distance would also neutralize potential future security and sonic issues with local Filipinos. Moving the depot to a central point within the base put the constant drone of supply activity out of the ears of Filipinos and American personnel living on base. Industrial spaces like the NSD at Subic Bay were defined by sound. And although the machine shops and other support facilities at the piers produced most of the sound and high decibel ranges, David Ball – the U.S. Navy veteran interlocutor in California, who I interviewed nearly fifty years after his time in the Philippines – explained that the force of sound also came from “people yelling back and forth” in those areas. He explained the complicated process of loading and unloading the ships, and that the vertical distance between the ship's topside watch and the sailors making deliveries made shouting a logistical necessity.⁸⁸ Industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay were produced by industrial infrastructure, and by the people operating industrial



Figure 2-2 Naval Supply Depot Storage/Terminal Complex. Background NSD Fuel Pier/Storage, 1969.⁹⁰



Figure 2-3 Naval Supply Depot Storage/Terminal Complex. Background Olongapo City, 1969.⁹¹

In addition to the new supply depot complex, the Navy expanded its industrial support services with a series of new shops and reorganized command structures to accommodate the increase in activities and workers present. By 1966, there were many kinds of industrial repair shops that filled the space with industrial sounds related to the type of work each shop did. Shop 64 featured the sounds of woodworking, including, “general carpentry work, boatbuilding and repair,” and “manufacturing all types of wood pattern for molding and machining requirements.”⁹² Shop 31 focused on “performing all types of machine work requiring lathes, milling machines, shapers, boring mill, metal spraying and precision grinding,” while shop 51 dealt with the “installation and overhaul of shipboard electrical equipment such as wiring, motor controllers, switch boxes, distribution panels, circuit breakers, transformers and other electrical units.”⁹³ These three workshops focused on different materials – wood, metal, and copper – and their sonic output differed based on each shop’s purpose. The sawing and shaving of wood had a different sonic palette than the milling machine and boring mill that sliced through huge sheets of metal or the finesse of electrical wiring.

While each shop possessed a unique industrial sonic signature, those sounds spilled out of each building and intersected in the ether, creating a larger industrial sonic emission. David Ball told me that if the shops were not air conditioned, the sound “was just that blast of air coming through those pipes, that door was open,” and that the workers in the shops couldn’t “keep it [sound] in the machinery space.”⁹⁴ David heard the industrial sonic emission. He heard it pouring out of the machine and repair shops on the shoreline, through open doors, windows, and exhaust pipes as workers struggled against the heat inside the

buildings. Other industrial work happened outside on the docks by the ships. Ship repair facility workers worked outside with wood, metal, and power tools to repair ships. The images below show ship repair workers putting together wooden covers to patch holes in the *USS Forrestal's* flight deck. The work area is crowded with laborers, filled with tools and materials. One image features a man using a power saw to cut a large piece wood piece while the other images shows three Filipino men hammering pieces of wood together. None of the men appear to be reacting to the drone of the saw or the whacking of the hammers. Those were everyday industrial work sounds that defined their environment. The sounds of industrial machinery and labor pooled into an assemblage that formed a distinct sound-space different from other areas of the base.

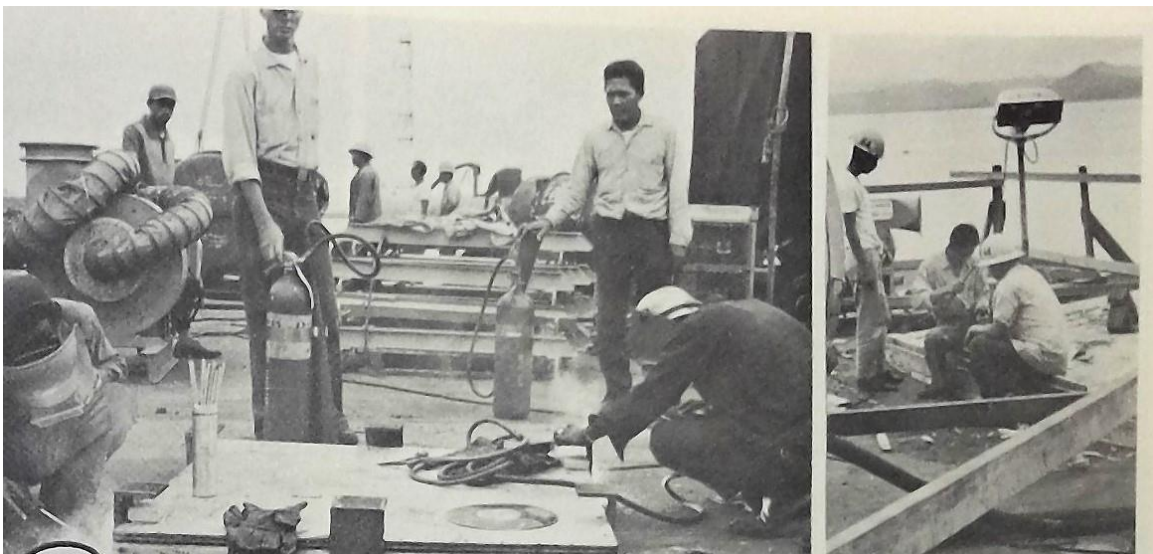


Figure 2-4: Americans and Filipinos repair damages sustained by the *USS Forrestal*.⁹⁵

Although Navy leaders did not recognize the impact of sound, other people experienced Subic's industrialism sonically and thought about sonic power. In a 1967 *Subic Bay News* article, reporter Romeo C. Alinea wrote a detailed report of Ship Repair Facility (SRF) 23, a blacksmiths shop. Alinea described how "this group makes known its presence

and its work by the sound and hot fumes it evolves,” that the “neatly arranged furnaces burn like inferno, aggravated by the resonant sounds of pounding hammers on iron bars atop anvils.”⁹⁶ The article is a propaganda piece that highlights the contributions of the shop’s fifty-three Filipino base workers. Alinea uses the clamor of the shop as a device to demonstrate the exceptional and humble work ethic of the workers, who, without complaint, wield fire and endure smashing metal to support the Navy’s missions: “Friendly fire after all retains its God-given usefulness and noise is not a nuisance per se in this place.”⁹⁷

This article articulates several issues relating to industrial sound at Subic Bay. At a raw, sonic level, Alina takes readers into this shop and provides sense of what it sounded like and how it fit into the overall industrial work area. We hear the “pounding hammers,” the “welding and chipping,” and the massive “electric driven hammer.”⁹⁸ It’s a loud place, one of many machine shops located at this area of the base. Beyond the sounds themselves, we can also see how sound like anything else, can be politicized. Alinea writes how the “deafening sounds” were not deterrents to the shop’s output. The Filipino workers are heroic in this narrative, doing difficult work in difficult conditions. It’s a sweaty, masculine space, full of strong men, wielding hammers and tongs while manipulating the elements. The volume and physical presence of the shop’s sounds was an important feature of each industrial workspace. Karin Bijsterveld wrote about how listening practices in industrial settings affected safety and production. She writes that “while unusual noises suggested mechanical faults, familiar sounds were a comfort... machines were behaving as they were supposed to.”⁹⁹ Laborers knew their craft and were also excellent listeners. The whoosh of the boiler’s fire and the specific pattern of rhythmic hammering were sonic signals that let the workers

know the status of the shop's operating safety and efficiency. Deviations in sonic patterns and rhythms could be cause for alarm, and Bijsterveld writes how industrial workers often resisted hearing protection despite the damage done to their hearing. They preferred their ears uncovered because listening was important to their safety. Although it is not clear from the article whether the Filipino workers wore ear protection, it is clear the blacksmith shop was loud enough to warrant protection.

With or without ear protection, industrial sounds and volume defined the docks and piers of the base. Ship repair at Subic Bay was an enormous industry, and the scale and breadth of the work done there increased throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. By 1968, Subic Bay hosted over 2,000 ships a year, about 228 a month – an increase from around ninety-eight visits a month in 1964.¹⁰⁰ With the war in Vietnam still at a highpoint for the Navy, ship repairs occurred frequently accompanied by industrial sounds. Subic Bay provided services that “included berthing, fueling and watering, small boat service, garbage collection, and tug and pilot assistance.”¹⁰¹ This description from Subic Bay's 1968 command history describes some of the activities happening at the docks, wharfs, and quays. In my interview with U.S. Navy veteran David Ball, he described the dense industrial sound palette of the docks and piers, and remembered that, “they were fairly organized, but they were loud because you were always bringing fuel on board or you were bringing supplies on board or something.”¹⁰² David worked at the docks and piers due to his job as a diver with the harbor clearance unit. David ascribed much of the volume at the docks to the military supplies and materials loaded onto ships. Based on the Navy's account, offloaded materials like

containers, machinery, and the sailors disembarking for liberty or other services contributed to the density of sound at the docks.

The range of industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay projected in many directions, including out across the water of the bay. With over 2,000 ships docking at Subic Bay each year, tugboat captains responsible for guiding the large warships in and out of the port worked constantly and filled the bay and the shoreline with the sounds of industrial labor. The Service Craft Division assisted with harbor patrols, transporting personnel and supplies, and training exercises, and later moved from SRF Rivers Point to the Boston Wharf, a move that “served to increase the space necessary to install new shops for electronics, electrical, injector, and engineering support to service and activity craft.”¹⁰³ The move created more space at the wharf areas for new industrial shops that covered a range of services related to ship repair. As Subic Bay’s industrial area expanded so did the acoustic industrial infrastructure attached to that industrial base. These shops existed as individual producers of industrial sonic emissions; when those individual sonic units intersected with others, they created a larger sonic palette, a structuring force in that area of the base.

Although located around the piers and quays, the base’s industrial infrastructure and accompanying sonic emissions cut through to other areas of the base. Jim Pope – the other veteran who I interviewed in California in 2018 – recalled how, “There was always a constant flow of trucks on and off the base because they would have to supply the ships, with whatever needs that was required. So, there was always a lot of truck traffic going back and forth all the time.”¹⁰⁴ And in a 1956 inspection of Subic Bay’s supply depot, the evaluators observed that “the limited number of flat beds and heavy duty trucks requires

most material to be moved on a trailer pulled by a farm truck.”¹⁰⁵ The magnitude of military vehicle traffic created displays of U.S. Naval military and economic power and a corresponding impact of sonic industrial influence. The military and state roads these vehicles travelled along helped to spread the reach of Subic Bay’s industrial sonic emissions. In their analysis of the political and state power of roads, Penny Harvey and Hannah Knox write that roads are spaces of “material transformation” that can disrupt the existing physical spaces they cut through, and represent social, cultural, and political processes of change.¹⁰⁶ Roads and vehicles were also tools of U.S. political and military power at Subic Bay and were preceded historically by the roads built by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Philippines decades earlier during World War II. Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez argues that U.S. military road building in the Philippines displayed the “constructive colonialism” of a U.S.-controlled Philippines, a break from the “decrepit, feminized Spanish colonialism that was both corrupt and inefficient.”¹⁰⁷ She writes about how the U.S. used roads “as symbols and material evidence of the modern American style of governing,” a gendered process and division of labor, order, and discipline.¹⁰⁸ The military vehicles traversing the roads around Subic Bay created material and sonic transformations on and off base, continued the practice of constructive colonialism by transporting materials, and reinforced militarized masculinity sonically and visually. The relationship between sounds (vehicles) and materials (roads) facilitated the sounds of military industrial transportation.



Figure 2-5: Trucks transport supplies between ships and the Naval Supply Depot.¹⁰⁹

Construction and Sound

The U.S. Navy changed Subic Bay's physical and sonic spaces through construction projects during the 1950s and 1960s. As new buildings and facilities went up and the look of Subic Bay changed, so did the sounds of the base. Large numbers of vehicles, machines, tools, and people present at the base's many construction sites brought with them the sounds of infrastructure construction – the sounds of sawing, drilling, and hammering. In 1967, for example, the Navy invested \$20.2M into new construction at Subic Bay. Major projects included an ammunition wharf, a Pol (petroleum, oils, and lubricants) offshore terminal, and an addition to the base's power plant, projects that cost several million dollars. The base's command history from 1967 also highlighted work done on the Subic-Clark

pipeline in June, an 80,000-barrel Pol tank, a communications building, and five ammunition magazines.¹¹⁰ The base's growing infrastructure transformed how sailors navigated the space of the base and heard the industrial sounds that defined and structured everyday life. The increase in operational activities and infrastructure was not matched by a proportional growth in personnel and personnel facilities, including on-base housing.

At the end of the 1960s and into the 1970s, Subic Bay continued to undergo infrastructural growth. With the 1975 withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Vietnam, Subic Bay absorbed new operational tasks and was an immediate postwar destination for sailors, Marines, and Vietnamese refugees. In 1970, under Subic Bay's Family Housing Construction Program, construction of 400 family units began, with units located at Subic Bay (300 units) and at the San Miguel Communications station (100).¹¹¹ The housing constructions projects continued to fill and structure the base with the sounds of industrial labor and machinery, and also created new spaces that would be filled with the sounds of Americans receiving orders to the Philippines.

In the 1950s, however, before the Navy came under pressure to expand the base's domestic and recreational offerings for sailors and civilians, construction at Subic Bay centered on military-industrial radio infrastructure – the materials and infrastructure that Subic Bay's sonic emissions transmitted through. In the mid-1950s, the U.S. Congress appropriated military construction funds for the Navy to build updated and permanent communications infrastructure in the Philippines. These new facilities – the transmitter and receiver stations – were located at different ends of the base (south in the Bataan Province and north in the Zambales Province). This new communications command became the main

military intelligence clearinghouse during the Vietnam War, a center for coordinating ship traffic, and connected to the Vietnamese coast via undersea cables. Navy planners intended for the northern facility to be the new Voice of America broadcast center for the region. The proposed site – later approved – allowed for the “installation of complete high and low frequency transmitting facilities” and the Navy believed “the area can be expanded for installation of VIF transmitting facilities.”¹¹² The U.S. communications facility cut through sovereign Philippine airspace for control over communication transmissions and radio frequencies. And although the Navy didn’t find a need for additional land for the station’s construction, they did reserve the right to “construct antenna fields” and to install “transmission lines, roads, underground piping and cables,” per the clauses outlined in the 1947 Military Bases Agreement.¹¹³ Naval and political leaders wanted to expand material infrastructure at Subic Bay to facilitate sonic military transmissions.

In the years after building the communications buildings, the Navy sought to expand its bandwidths and number of frequency lines used in the Philippines. This had to be done through the Philippine Joint Radio Link Board, meaning the U.S. Navy needed approval from the Philippine Government to expand its sonic-transmitting capacity. A few years earlier, the Philippine Government forced the Navy to return some of its megacycle bandwidth back to the Philippines Government so the country could meet its own regulations and standards for television, radio broadcasting, and communications speeds.¹¹⁴ As Subic Bay’s infrastructure expanded with new installations, the Navy found the previously approved levels of bandwidth and designated frequency clearances operationally insufficient, with Naval communications suffering broadcasting time delays. The issue

persisted between both governments into the early 1960s, and U.S. Naval leaders complained about “the excessive time delay encountered in frequency coordination with the host government.”¹¹⁵ The Navy used identical language to describe the radio infrastructure and the Philippine Government, suggesting that Navy personnel considered Philippine representatives as another appendage to military sonic industrialism, and not allied allies with equal bargaining power.

Another way to think about the political ecology of sonic emissions at Subic Bay is to consider how U.S. Naval leadership neglected industrial-sonic emissions. In 1955, for example, the Navy sought congressional and DoD approval to contract with Standard-Vacuum Oil for the construction of an oil refinery near the base.¹¹⁶ Standard-Vacuum received approval for the refinery, and they began construction in 1957. The Philippine Government took over the refinery and nationalized it in the 1970s. In a memo between two high ranking Naval leaders, they discussed how the potential oil refinery could produce “AVGAS, MOGAS, kerosene, automotive and industrial diesel, asphalt, and perhaps jet fuel.”¹¹⁷ The possible oil refinery products reveal the vehicles and activities at Subic Bay needing that fuel; there were numerous aircraft, ships, cars, and other military vehicles driven and piloted on and off base for personal, commercial, and military use, and there were strict curfew laws that limited driving hours so the Navy could monitor both sound and security. Although the Navy was not interested in the collective sounds of the base’s motor pools and airstrips, local newspapers and ship yearbooks detailed the noise of traffic around the base, the chaos of aircraft accidents and other explosions, and the sounds of labor and production related to supply logistics and transportation – the transduction of material into sound. The

sonic-material politics of the POL terminal added to Subic Bay in the late 1960s were like those of the oil refinery. The POL, however, was located near the middle of the base, close to the new supply depot. A POL buoy served as an additional fueling source near the Leyte Pier due to the increased number of U.S. ships passing through Subic Bay to and from Vietnam. Logistic and geographic concerns motivated the Navy to place the POL buoy centrally near the supply depot. The new location also placed this busy and noisy area further away from the reservation's boundaries, thus mitigating any possibilities of invasive industrial sonic emissions. The addition of the POL terminal in conjunction with the already existing oil refinery demonstrates the increased presence and use of trucks, planes, ships, and boats. That increase in industrial fuel and transportation meant that sailors and civilians heard aircraft noise, traffic congestion, and ship horns in the bay with greater frequency and volume.

In these examples, expanding overseas U.S. militarization impacted sound, space, and materials. As the Navy built more facilities during the 1950s and 1960s, they sought expanded control over signal and other kinds of intelligence, airwaves, frequencies, and bandwidths, *and* the land around the communications buildings. Listening to the base's history through sound shifts an analytical focus to the impact of industrial and sonic production on local culture and people, and away from the detached realpolitik that often characterized the views of upper U.S. military and political leadership towards the Philippines. Sound in military, political, and diplomatic spheres was politicized during this time. Subic Bay's sonic culture changed as the Navy produced industrial sounds that affected

the local environment and economy. at Subic Bay affected the sound worlds of the people who lived around the base.

The most significant construction project that affected sound life at Subic Bay was U.S. Naval Air Station, Cubi Point project. A major addition to the Subic Bay Naval complex, the air station expanded the range of possible military activities and added to the Navy's size and infrastructure in Zambales Province. Constructing the air station was a massive undertaking overseen by the U.S. Seabees. The Seabees inherited the project from private contractors who deemed the job "an impossible one."¹¹⁸ The 9100-foot airstrip and the accompanying complexes took five years to finish (1951-1956) and was commissioned on July 25, 1956. To complete construction, "600-man Navy construction crews moved 20 million cubic yards of earth and rock – more than was moved to build the Panama Canal."¹¹⁹ Although the narrative of Cubi Point is one of great American achievement, Gerald R. Anderson writes that for some Filipinos constructing Cubi Point was actually an act of destruction. Anderson writes how, "the town of Banicain stood on the site of the proposed airfield and so had to be moved to the community of Olongapo where it became New Banicain. The former Banicain now lies under 45 feet of earth."¹²⁰ While the vehicles, material, earth, and engineers turned the area around Subic Bay into a massive sonic construction site, towns like Banicain went silent, buried to make room for U.S. military infrastructure. Cubi Point became a site of dense sonic activity, with Naval aircraft taking off and landing, and of the cadences and rifle qualifications of the Marine security detachment training and marching at the air station. The U.S. military construction displaced Filipino

community sounds and replaced them with the sounds of military-industrial sonic emissions, sounded by materials, service members, and infrastructure.



Figure 2-6: Materials and sounds: U.S. Naval engineers build Cubi Point, circa 1950s.¹²¹

The push for a Naval air station in Southeast Asia came from Admiral Arthur W. Radford, a passionate anti-communist. In response to the Korean War he called for greater

American military commitment and infrastructure in the Southwest Pacific. Appointed by President Truman as Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in 1949, Radford was familiar with security issues in the region and fought against the Truman administration's budget cuts to the Navy that same year. Appointed as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Radford worked with Eisenhower on U.S. defense policies and advocated for a muscular stance against China. Radford wanted to build up Naval aircraft infrastructure to bomb America's enemies. He envisioned a new Naval Air Station in the Philippines that could service Naval aircraft in the region and reinforce and expand the ring of U.S. military bases in the Pacific.¹²² Although referred to as "Radford's Folly" by his critics, Radford's vision for Cubi Point proved prescient. Cubi Point was the nearest Naval air station to operations in Vietnam, and repair and maintenance services and facilities increased as outside commands sent additional support units to the air station. In 1968, *The Navy Times* cheered that "'Radford's Folly' Emerges as Strategic Bastion."¹²³ The physical and sonic damage done to Philippine territory to build the air station was not a concern for Radford and other Naval and political leaders who facilitated the construction. The effect of industrial construction sounds on the natural environment and the people who lived nearby are not present in the Navy's historical records of Subic Bay. Instead, Cubi Point manifested "constructive colonialism,"¹²⁴ or benevolent assimilation, or the white man's burden; it was a project to modernize, improve, and organize the untamed Philippine jungles, to reorganize the industry, sound, and culture at Subic Bay around the ideal of American militarism.

Accidents, Crimes, and Security

The sounds and materials part of Subic Bay's growing industrial landscape were not limited to the main industrial sectors of the base. The range of industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay extended into other areas on and off the base in violent and dangerous forms. Although industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay resulted from industrial production and consumption, the scope of industrial sonic emissions also accounted for military ordinance and vehicles built, stored, and maintained on the base. Industrial sonic emissions included accidents, crimes, and security issues related to base life. Overt examples of sonic-security emissions were the many vehicle and aircraft crashes and ordinance explosions that occurred at Subic Bay and Olongapo throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. In 1966, one of the Navy's Phantom Jets crashed in Olongapo, killing three and destroying the surrounding properties.¹²⁵ In 1967, a projectile in the base's Naval Magazine exploded, injuring four Filipino base workers.¹²⁶ In 1968, another Phantom crashed into the base's Naval Magazine. The explosion set off ordinance in the magazine and resulted in fires and the destruction of nearby fencing and other infrastructure.¹²⁷ And in 1970, an artillery shell scavenged by five Filipinos exploded, killing all of them.¹²⁸ The pattern was a series of random, noisy, and destructive explosions on and off base that affected base workers and nearby communities. Subic Bay became a source for material destruction and the sounds of recurrent explosions. The increase in crashes and explosions through the late 1960s resulted partly because of increased ship traffic. Subic hosted nearly 200 port visits a month by 1966, compared to a peak of 100 two years earlier in 1964.¹²⁹ There were more ships, more sailors, more sounds, and more things that could go wrong. Personnel worked long hours and the base's facilities

and infrastructure faced increased pressure and operational demands. The Navy's actions to restructure the Subic Bay's anchorage boundaries in response to malignant piracy against United States ships had a corresponding effect on sounds in the bay and on base.

The aircraft crashes and ammunition explosions were sonic events that signaled the breakdown, inefficiency, and errors in the Navy's operations at Subic Bay. The destruction, fires, and broken parts sounded out to Americans and Filipinos the dangers of a U.S. Naval presence in the Philippines. Christina Schwenkel wrote about how the "breakdown and decay of infrastructure both exposed and reinforced existing hierarchies" in Vietnam, and I think the frequency of destructive industrial sonic emissions at Subic Bay also challenged the Navy's efforts at maintaining existing power dynamics with their Filipino neighbors in Olongapo City and the local laborers employed on base.¹³⁰ These explosions – among other sonic events – justified Filipino concerns about the consequences of the continued U.S. Naval presence. The 1960s onward saw activists form anti-nuclear and anti-base organizations to address concerns about Subic Bay and Clark Air Base in the Philippines and the United States. New and existing groups responded to and protested U.S. bases and the Marcos regime. Many groups found renewed political potency in the 1980s, including organizations like the Nuclear Free Philippines Coalition, the U.S.-based Friends of the Filipino People, the Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines, the Movement for a Free Philippines, and the Anti-Martial Law Coalition.¹³¹

Alongside fear of nuclear annihilation, foreign attacks, and dependency on American aid, Filipinos experienced a quotidian sonic precarity through their regular exposure to invasive and destructive military sounds. By the late 1980s, Filipino anti-war and anti-base

activists held substantial evidence that the U.S.-Philippine military relationship created a culture of precarity. Roland Simbulan argued that U.S. bases in the Philippines made the Philippines *less* safe and perpetuated a neo-colonial relationship that favored the United States. He felt the bases “maintained a state of conquest” and were “an extension of an imperial state.”¹³² For Simbulan, the materially present U.S. bases were not deterrents of war, but targets; the special relationship with the United States made the Philippines vulnerable. By the 1980s, Simbulan and his peers could point to thirty years of examples demonstrating that vulnerability – the aircraft crashes, fires, and explosions in Olongapo and on base – that conveyed sonically and materially the dangers and risks posed by the continued presence of the U.S. Navy.

Other Filipino activists looked back at decades of U.S. Navy ship visits and expressed their concerns about nuclear precarity at Subic Bay. Philippine law professor Merlin Magallan voiced his concern about nuclear devices passing through or near Subic Bay and argued that the Philippines was not equal in its relationship with the United States. The Philippines was instead a target, a site to deflect attacks away from the U.S. mainland.¹³³ Filipinos (and Americans) used the existential threat of nuclear precarity to contest the U.S. Naval presence in the Philippines.¹³⁴ Like Simbulan, Magallan wrote in response to sonic and other kinds material injustices and problems that Filipinos suffered from due to their proximity an experience with the U.S. Navy. The sounds of exploding military materials was a distinct part of life at and near Subic Bay, an extension of industrial sonic emissions; the products of and facilitators of war and violence – aircraft and bombs – separated from their

sources, could still shape daily life and expanded the cloud of industrial emissions great lengths beyond the hub of industrial production on base.



Figure 2-7: Article headline of an ordinance explosion at Subic Bay's Naval Magazine.¹³⁵

Industrial sonic emissions moved through and across the base in other ways, too. By the early 1970s, the residents of Olongapo City could recognize the sounds of mobile military industrial sounds. The U.S. Navy worked with Olongapo city's leadership to help restore public utilities and infrastructures damaged regularly by typhoons, fires, and other natural or manmade disasters. The Navy wanted to strengthen local relations, and a malfunctioning Olongapo affected industrial labor and production on base, potentially harming the Navy's operational readiness. It appears that Subic Bay's leaders were not

acting on altruistic intentions or motivated by guilt over the poor quality of infrastructures installed by the Navy in Olongapo by previous generations of Naval engineers. The crude, rusting, and deteriorating city infrastructures were not designed or maintained in a way that could cope with large-scale disasters. Typhoon Patsy, for example, devastated Olongapo in November 1970. To help, the U.S. Navy at Subic “were quick to render assistance,” and “in due time, the necessary generators, motors, and other equipment from the base were brought to the city and installed for the emergency period.”¹³⁶ This intervention restored the water system, hospitals, and communications in the city.¹³⁷ The Navy filled the city with the sounds of military industry, of generators, vehicles, and personnel.

Industrial sounds at Subic Bay also connected to concerns about base security. In the late 1950s the U.S. Navy completed a study on U.S. base security in the Philippines, and one of the main sections was about mechanical alarms. This was one of the rare instances in the Navy’s records that was about sound explicitly, although the word “sound” was never used. The study’s authors explained that “pure bell-ringing or other noise will not prevent crime unless it scares away the perpetrator thereof before he accomplishes his act.”¹³⁸ The study later described that,

mechanical alarms have been used sparingly in the Philippines because they do not protect our outside facilities...mechanical alarms are specialized devices to fit doors, windows, hallways, approaches, and the like, and are not adaptable to the protection of far-flung facilities like antenna, towers, guy lines, culverts, cable lines, and so on.¹³⁹

Alarms, the study concluded, were useful only in areas where armed responders could be summoned quickly. For Navy security experts, sound had security value only with human

agents present. On its own, sound was unimportant. The study shows that alarms, horns, sirens, and whistles were part of the Navy's debates about security and industrial sonic emissions. This example also demonstrates the extent of military industrial infrastructure at Subic Bay and in the Philippines. The Navy worried that alarms were ineffective without anyone nearby to respond to their warning sounds. There was so much infrastructure and ground to cover that sound alarms would not be loud enough. The study's description of the specialized alarm devices also demonstrates how the sounds of military industry were materially embedded in the infrastructure of the base. Alarms fitted precisely into their designated spaces, considered aspects designed for military infrastructure.

For Navy leaders and planners at Subic Bay, sound was important as it related to security. This was also evident in the "Sounding of horns, sirens, bells, whistles, or other devices" section of the 1952 Naval Reservation regulations. The section states that "only fire apparatus, ambulances, and police vehicles are authorized to use sirens, bells, and whistles as signaling devices," and that "no operator (with the exception herein above cited) shall sound frequent or sustained blasts of the horn or other signaling device under any circumstances not imperatively necessary," "or in the vicinity of hospitals, courts, other designated zones of quiet."¹⁴⁰ Although restrictions on vehicular sirens or sound signaling devices were not unique to Subic Bay or even military bases, that section's specificity regarding of the base's regulations reveals how the Navy asserted control over daily sonic life at Subic Bay. The Navy "designated zones of quiet" and outlined strict parameters regarding siren usage – attempts to control the ripples of industrial sound across the base.

Although Navy officers didn't concern themselves with the dangerous or violent implications or outcomes of its sonic-industrial footprint, Naval Station, Sangley Point's closing at Manila Bay in 1970 demonstrates the Navy's tacit awareness that sonic industrial emissions mattered and could make U.S.-Philippine relations complicated politically at Subic Bay. Sangley Point was a smaller U.S. Naval Station near Cavite City located on Manila Bay. Although negotiations concerning the base predated its 1970 closure, the decision to close the base was one of many real and symbolic concessions made by the United States to the Philippine government for the maintenance of positive U.S.-Philippine military and diplomatic relations. As the 1960s turned into the 1970s, Philippine and American diplomats continued to navigate the future of their respective country's individual needs against the arrangements of earlier agreed upon treaties.

Sound might also have had a role in the base's closure. Naval aircraft noise was apparently such a serious concern for either local Filipino residents or for Navy personnel at Naval Station, Sangley Point in the early 1960s, the base's leadership added a dedicated staff position to address the issue - the Aircraft Noise Abatement Officer (see Figure 8 below).¹⁴¹ The Navy seems to have created the noise abatement officer position to respond to concerns and complaints about aircraft noise at the base.¹⁴² The added text is in bright blue ink and stands out against the printed black text. Naval customs and courtesies traditionally reserve blue ink for commanding officers (CO), meaning that Sangley Point's commanding officer likely wrote in the command staff changes to the command chart. Annotations made in blue and black ink also signify this was an official directive – amendment – to the base's command structure, and perhaps of personal interest to the CO. Sangley Point's CO wanted

officers and enlisted to see clearly the new position's place in the base's command hierarchy. The noise abatement officer was in an important position in that hierarchy, and belonged to the base commander's special staff assistants, a group including officers handling legal affairs, public affairs, aviation safety, general safety, the brig, and faith (chaplain). These Navy officers advised and briefed the base commander and executive officer directly on specific issues affecting the base and personnel. Including the abatement officer as a special assistant meant that Sangley Point's CO considered noise and sound as important as base and brig security, the Navy's public image, various legal issues, and faith and morale. Noise (sound) mattered, and that the Navy created that noise made it an issue for the base's top officer.

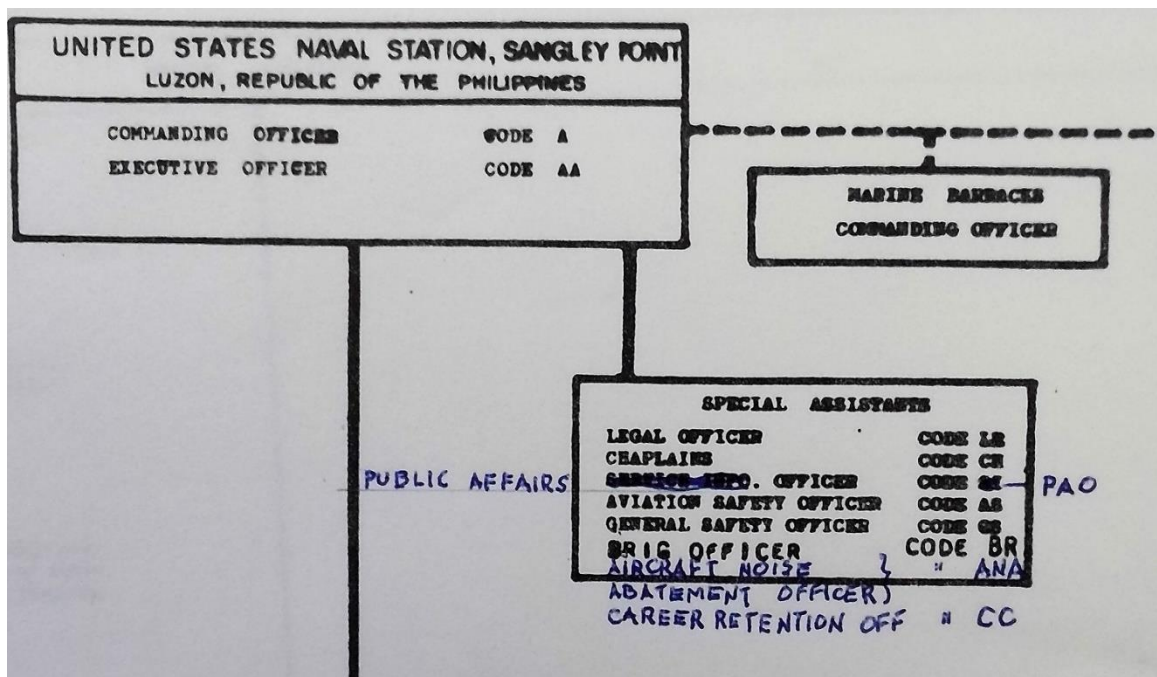


Figure 2-8: Aircraft Noise Abatement Officers. Hand-written changes to Naval Base, Sangley Point's Command Chart.¹⁴³

The Politics of Sound and Materials

When relieved of his position as Commander, U.S. Forces, Vietnam in 1968, General William C. Westmoreland made a speech at Subic Bay before departing for the United States. Westmoreland praised the base's personnel for their support of combat operations in Vietnam and explained that Subic Bay was "the BBB-O Bar Zero," which meant, "your job is beans, bullets and black oil," bar none.¹⁴⁴ Westmoreland's folksy comments described the importance of military industrial infrastructure at Subic Bay to the war in Vietnam. And Westmoreland was right – while Subic Bay supplied and traded in more than bullets, beans, and black oil, its main purpose and function in the 1960s was to support to the Vietnam War. Westmoreland acknowledged the efforts of the diverse industrial command units at Subic Bay foundational to the sonic structure and culture of the base. His comments also highlighted how infrastructures and industrial sounds of the Naval base mediated the relationship between the United States and the Philippines.

The Philippines was not an equal partner to the United States, and Subic Bay was usually an afterthought for Naval leaders. Chronically understaffed, underfunded, overworked, the base needed repairs and refurbishment, too. Subic Bay was a convenient waystation and Olongapo a source of labor, and they made the base important to U.S. foreign and military policy. U.S. Naval leaders displayed mild interest or concern for their Filipino hosts. In an overview of a 1956 military construction conference, Naval officers debated the merits of subterranean construction for new command posts at Subic Bay without considering the impact that type of construction could have on the base's sonic and political relationship with local Filipinos.¹⁴⁵ One officer was eager, and willing to, if

necessary, “start digging holes into the mountains at Subic.”¹⁴⁶ The space and sounds of Subic Bay carried no significance for this officer. Philippine land, space, and sound were elements to manipulate and control for the benefit of the U.S. Navy. The comment is particularly telling because in 1956 the U.S. Navy completed construction on U.S. Naval Air Station, Cubi Point, a massive expansion of the Naval Reservation at Subic Bay. Navy Seabees had just spent five years blasting, digging, and removing mountainous areas around Subic to make space for the air station. The Seabees tore apart Philippine land and disrupted sonic life and existing ecosystems.

Studying the overlap between military sounds and materials at Subic Bay highlights the relationship of sound and space in structuring a place. The Navy erected the buildings of the base’s industrial areas close together on the shores of Subic Bay to be as close as possible to ships and boats needing support. These spaces serviced the modern U.S. Navy. Historian Emily Thompson writes about the modern technological soundscape of the twentieth century and argues that new materials and sounds brought on the “reformulation of the relationship between sound and space.”¹⁴⁷ Thompson asserts that as the new technological soundscape took shape, sound gradually dissociated from space until the relationship ceased to exist.”¹⁴⁸ Based on what I learned from veterans and U.S. Naval records, I think Thompson’s argument about the dissociation of sound and space did not manifest at Subic Bay in the manner she describes. David Ball, for instance, described to me how at certain areas of the industrial shoreline, “there wasn’t a lot of noise on that [quay]. Because generally, the guys were there working on their gear – working on diving gear – or they’re repairing pumps and motors and stuff like that. You’d have the general machinery space

noise. But as far as people yelling at each other and so forth, there really wasn't that much."¹⁴⁹ In Thompson's modern technological soundscape, new materials and architectural techniques combined with noise ordinance policies quieted the world while machinery thundered on undercover. Sounds and silences rather than creeping systematic sound or noise regulation defined Subic Bay's industrial spaces. The machine shops were not covered or underground. They lined the shore with doors and windows open. And individual units like David's diving unit completed their industrial labor in relative silence because the work required their concentration. Subic Bay's growth in the 1950s and 1960s lacked proportionate growth in funding and manpower, and the Navy couldn't afford sound-proofing or other material devices to regulate industrial sound. For a busy industrial sector, there was space for sonic life beyond the ubiquitous industrial machinery. David and other divers worked on their individual diving gear, adjusting and repairing. They were away from the shouts and calls of sailors disembarking and supplies, crates, and materials moving from shore to ship. They created and filled an industrial sound space on a smaller scale. The mass volume of industrial sonic emissions could also be matched by industrial quiet.

The quiet sound life experienced by sailors on base, however, did not always hold true for Filipinos living off base. Quiet was rare due to the frequent crashes, explosions, traffic, and material transportation and manipulation. Sound and noise pollution were everyday realities, spillover from the Navy's base at Subic Bay. And although concerns about environmental pollution were one of the main arguments used by Filipinos to protest the continued presence of U.S. military bases in the Philippines, the historical record focused disproportionately on land, air, and water pollution, rather than moral, sonic, or visual

pollution. I think this happened because it was easier to track and measure erosion of land; it was difficult to provide data or metrics about range of more abstract or visually fleeting polluting forces. The tangible, earthiness of the land lent itself more easily to studies and critiques of ruptures, pollution, and impact. The physical traces of land make studies like David Biggs's *Footprints of War* accessible – there is material to *look* at: maps, artifacts, and structures. Land also grants more immediate access to the scale of history, and to change over time. Biggs describes the militarized landscape of Vietnam as a physical palimpsest, a device he uses to “focus on the longer history of this long-militarized landscape through multiple layers of military construction and destruction.”¹⁵⁰ This could be done in the Philippines too, but there is a difference between the war landscapes of the Philippines and Vietnam. The main difference is water, a defining feature of war and violence in the Philippines.

Writing a history through water or sound presents different challenges than a history through or of land. Fluid in nature, sound and water are slippery historical subjects and frameworks. Studying and writing about sound culture and sound history is not as easily accomplished with the earprint of war compared to its footprint. There is less to hold on to and fewer reference points. Focusing on the material producers of sound is an important methodology. It splits the difference between landscape and soundscape. It gives readers and researchers something to look at and look for as they listen for the sonic void between themselves and the past, between object and sound. Industrial sonic emissions help to circumvent challenges in engaging with the “sound object,” to avoid “commodity fetishism in sound” and not, as Jonathan Sterne describes, “attribute magical powers to instruments at

some distance from the moments of their use.”¹⁵¹ Schwenkel writes that faith in an infrastructure’s capacity to enhance life often “generates a sublime enchantment with large-scale infrastructure projects.”¹⁵² Naval records show that neoliberal military and civilian technocrats admired industrial infrastructure and sonic emissions and marveled at clean production efficiency and a sense of progress and modernity. Industrial material and sounds at Subic Bay were also messy and unwieldy, bloated, sometimes broken, and usually understaffed; they were not always shiny tools or instruments of production. The obsession over the industrial sound object is as much about the sound product as the display of capitalist and material power. Broken into its constituent parts and individual sonic emissions, the sum of the military-industrial complex is a collection of ugly and loud sounds and sound objects, easily fetishized.

The examples of industrial sonic imprint in this chapter provide a sense of everyday working life for many sailors and civilians at Subic Bay. These examples engage the ears and the eyes and poke at settled definitions and understandings about the culture and functions of a military base. It is difficult to experience or study the inner workings of a military base conceptually or physically. They are strategically inaccessible places to researcher and critics, and in this case, distant historically. An oblique listening of industrial sound at Subic Bay, Philippines during the 1950s and 1960s can provide insight into everyday life, the political stakes between the United States and the Philippines, and the relationship between sound, space, and materials. I return here to the questions guiding this chapter: how do sound and infrastructure relate to one another? How do these intersecting and overlapping forces create what Tsing and Anand call lifeworlds -- in sound terms, what Feld calls acoustemologies?

How is place constructed through sound, through industry, through infrastructure, and through the sounds of industrial infrastructure? Steven Connor wrote that the paradox of hearing – the paradox of sound – is that “it strikes us at once intensely corporeal – sound literally moves, shakes, and touches us – and mysteriously immaterial.”¹⁵³ What Connor describes is one of the central tensions of industrial sonic emissions. Representations of sound can be ephemeral and difficult to document beyond the written word or a recording. While the experience of sound can be felt in a physiological way, the materiality of sound and sounds attached to materials are not as easily accessible, especially sounds and materials of the past. For U.S. sailors and Filipino civilian base workers, the sounds of infrastructure influenced how they worked and where they worked at Subic Bay. The relationship between sound and infrastructure also affected the physical layout of the base throughout the 1950s and 1960s, with certain decisions regarding construction considered from a sonic-political perspective. At Subic Bay, space and sound overlapped as Navy leadership tried to control the impact of their self-noise and its effect on geography, materials, and labor practices.

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Military sounds and materials are often the clearest examples of militarization. They are sensed; materials are seen, and sounds are heard. Military-industrial sounds and materials, however, can also be internalized, leading to normalized military landscapes and soundscapes. This happened at Subic Bay, where the sounds of militarization ceased to be distinct factors, accepted passively and uncritically by the U.S. Navy. And yet, despite spending a year writing about the absence of sonic criticism at Subic Bay, I discovered first-hand how easy it is to become a tacit listener to the U.S. military industry. When I first

moved to Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton with my wife, I was hyper-conscious of the sights and sounds. The constant helicopter and vehicle traffic, the large warehouses and motor pools, the weapons and guards at the gates – these were sonic and material reminders that I was living in a military space. I don't notice those things anymore. I live amidst military industrial sounds. Those previously unfamiliar military sounds and materials are now the background of my everyday life. I shifted my attention to different kinds military base industrial sounds and materials – the layout of the backyard, the maintenance and cleaning of the house, and the piano we inherited from a neighbor. For service members and civilians like myself living at Camp Pendleton, there are different layers of industrial sonic emissions and an overlap of the many sound spaces that comprise the base.

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⁷² Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut. "Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane." *TDR: The Drama Review*, 54/.1 (2010), 20.

⁷³ Ibid., 20.

⁷⁴ Stanyek and Piekut, 17.

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⁷⁶ J. Martin Daughtry, *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 56-58.

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- ¹⁴¹ Command Chart, U.S. Naval Station, Sangley Point, Organization Manual, 5. 6 December 1963. Folder Sangley Point, Philippines, U.S. Naval Station, 1966. Box # 1533, NHHC.
- ¹⁴² I have been unsuccessful in finding more information about noise abatement and the specific position at Sangley Point. I spoke with several Naval historians and active duty Naval officers, and none of them were familiar with the position or knew of a contemporary equivalent. It is possible that the position was unique to the circumstances at Sangley Point. The Navy did not archive its documents related to decibel ranges and sound surveys of its overseas bases. Those documents could have revealed more about how the Navy conducted investigations into noise complaints, and about the noise abatement officer position.
- ¹⁴³ Command Chart, U.S. Naval Station, Sangley Point, Organization Manual, 5. 6 December 1963. Folder Sangley Point, Philippines, U.S. Naval Station, 1966. Box # 1533, NHHC.

¹⁴⁴ “Westmoreland Praises Subic/Cubi Support.” *Subic Bay News*, Vol. XVI, No. 23, 14 June, 1968, 1. Folder Subic Bay, P.I. – U.S. Naval Base, Philippines, C.H. 1966, Shore Establishment File, Box # 1585, NHHC.

¹⁴⁵ Subterranean construction refers to construction projects built into the ground for security and protection against destructive attacks.

¹⁴⁶ Report concerning Conference on Protective Construction, 13 July 1956, 3. Folder Protective Construction, 12, Box 9/11, NRHS 313-08-006, RG 313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Philippines, General Correspondence and Reports, 1945-1959, NARA-San Bruno.

¹⁴⁷ Emily Thompson, “Sound, Modernity and History,” in Jonathan Sterne, *The Sound Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 118.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ David Ball (retired U.S. Navy), interview by Kevin Sliwoski, Solana Beach, CA, April 11, 2018, transcript.

¹⁵⁰ David Biggs, *Footprints of War: Militarized Landscapes in Vietnam* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 10.

¹⁵¹ Jonathan Sterne, “Spectral Objects: On the Fetish Character of Music Technologies,” in James A. Steintrager and Rey Chow, eds., *Sound Objects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 95, 107.

¹⁵² Schwenkel, “Spectacular Infrastructure,” 524.

¹⁵³ Steven Connor, “Thinking About Sound, Proximity, and Distance in Western Experience: The Case of Odysseus’s Walkman,” in Veit Erlmann, ed., *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2004), 157.

Chapter III: Military-Sonic Domesticity

Listening Every Day

Although many scholars have written about the history and impact of Naval Base, Subic Bay through economic, racial, gendered, and political lenses, the perspective of everyday life and concerns of U.S. sailors and civilians at the base has been neglected. A sonic interpretation and reading of the base's history help make those viewpoints more accessible. Textual and ethnographic military sources are often produced without considering sound, and it can be challenging to conjure sonic histories or memories when sound is always thought of as something in the background. Sound is best read for obliquely in such instances. Archival materials demonstrate that domestic and family concerns affected a sailor's overseas experience. Putting together sonic life and domestic life, two overlooked perspectives of Subic Bay's history, shifts common assumptions and narratives about the base. Sound structured daily life and domestic rituals at Naval Base, Subic Bay for sailors and family members like David Ball and his wife. Sound affected labor practices, spatial arrangements, and community interactions. Top 40 radio programs, USO-sponsored entertainment, and celebrity visitors and performers like Danny Kaye were part of everyday domestic life at Subic Bay. These sounds differed from the sounds and spaces of military industry and combat at the piers and docks of the base, and distinct in their environments compared to the bars, brothels, and other sonic spaces that characterized nearby Olongapo City. In this chapter, I explore the sonic aspects of military domesticity of Subic Bay, those sounds that reverberated through households, streets, and community centers that structured and defined daily life for American military families in the Philippines. I introduce the

concept *military-sonic domesticity* to describe the totality of sound and music located in suburban-style neighborhoods and family areas on and off base. By writing about sound and military domesticity, I complicate and enrich familiar narratives of the U.S. military in Philippines, narratives dominated by a strict set of historical actors – diplomats, American sailors, and Filipinas. I also challenge axioms about Subic Bay and Olongapo that risk reducing the history and culture of the base and the city to platitudes and clichés. Sonic perspectives encourage a different vantage point to study the functions and history of Cold War-era overseas U.S. militarization in the Philippines. Listening obliquely to the historical record is an empathic and humanizing shift to people and places that fall beyond the usual scope of military histories. Deborah Kapchan argues that “*listening* is the first step not only in translating sound into words, but in compassionate scholarship.”¹⁵⁴ Studies about militarization, geopolitics, and the U.S. military settle between tones of hyper-criticism or devout exaltation and leave little space for compassion, empathy, and nuance. Sound studies intervenes in that binary and brings critical and reflexive empathy across the humanities. Sound scholars listen attentively to familiar and unfamiliar people, moments, and spaces. I listen compassionately to the wives and families who accompanied sailors overseas to the Philippines, the people often neglected in military histories.

Military-Sonic Domesticity

The pattern of overseas combat deployments and the expanding network of duty stations that characterized the U.S. military in the twentieth century obscured the domestic aspects of the military and of military bases. Military culture and base borders created distance between American civilians, service members, and their families. Military bases were

off limits for civilians. Overseas military bases were even more opaque and far away to American citizens. Historians, reporters, and cultural critics neglected military-domesticity and the concerns of military families and communities partly because of the logistical challenges accessing those communities. Scholars such as Laura McEnaney, Kenneth MacLeish, and Catherine Lutz, however, highlight aspects of the military domestic and demonstrate how processes of U.S. militarization affect military families, bases, nearby towns, and women.¹⁵⁵ MacLeish writes that militaries in general, “depend on and institutionalize the reproduction of largely male military labor by a vast array of female household, service, and sexual labor.”¹⁵⁶ In her study on the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) of the 1950s – which brought about the “militarization of everyday life” – McEnaney argues that civil defense was a “peculiar fusion of Cold War military ethics and idealized domesticity” that relied on the efforts of American women to militarize domestic life and domesticate military space.¹⁵⁷ Both scholars argue that women’s domestic labor and roles in the military supported men’s public and professional work as soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

This domestic sphere was not exclusive to military wives or families, and men serving in the military moved between industrial and domestic spaces. In *Does Khaki Become You*, Cynthia Enloe describes the roles and duties the U.S. military expected civilian women to perform. To support the military way-of-life, they filled roles like “prostitutes, wives, nurses, women soldiers, women insurgents, and defence workers.”¹⁵⁸ Enloe argues that control of women’s unpaid and unrecognized labor in modern military systems “keep women in the role of camp followers – usable, dispensable, replaceable.”¹⁵⁹ Enloe also

suggests that the encroaching militarization of women's lives reveals fundamental socio-cultural issues and vulnerabilities within the U.S. military. She argues that scrutinizing and highlighting women's roles in and relationships to the military could change how the military views women and how scholars could write feminist-oriented histories and critiques of the military. She further suggests that while the military expected women to act as domesticating agents for their husbands and families, the military was also domesticating them, slotting them into specific roles like wife, nurse, mother, or worker.

For military families during the mid-twentieth century, domestic life connected to suburban housing. In many ways, the family housing areas at Subic Bay were like any other American suburban community. There were family subdivisions, backyards, schools, community centers, recreation courts, movie theaters, mini-golf parks, concert venues, and swimming pools. Subic Bay was a home. It was a home to thousands of Americans as much as it was a logistics and supply hub for the Navy. On a larger scale, Naval Base, Subic Bay was a military suburb of the United States. One of many overseas military suburbs where American citizens lived in suburban-style communities and residential areas. Military wives and families lived in these communities while their husbands worked on base or deployed and created and maintained a domestic life imitating the communities they left behind in the United States. Or, they fulfilled the cultural imaginary of an ideal garden city suburb and the accompanying strict, domestic binary of gender roles, and noise ordinance. In a foreign country far from home, these distinctions become more pronounced. For military wives who lived on and off base, the limits of language, mobility, and knowledge of their host country

kept them at home relatively isolated, while active duty service members moved between home and work.

In this chapter, I argue that domestic sounds organized life at Naval Base, Subic Bay, through what I call *military-sonic domesticity*. Military-sonic domesticity refers to the collection of sounds emitting from home and family environments on and off a military base. These communities abetted and overlapped with warfighting and industrial areas of a base, but were architecturally, socially, and sonically distinct. Subic Bay's sonic domesticity informed how Americans and Filipinos understood and negotiated space, politics, gender, race, and labor on base. Music and other domestic sounds like Bill Strauss's 1966 radio show "Folk Music of the World," the shouts of competition during "organized athletics" on the base's athletics courts, or an impromptu performance of three guitar players playing and singing for one of their departing officers provided filled the background of everyday domestic life with sound.¹⁶⁰ The dialogue between sonic and domestic historical perspectives thickens the already dense history of the U.S. Navy at Subic Bay by adding new ways of hearing and visualizing life on base.

On Base: Splendid Isolation

Daily life for Americans living on-base at Subic Bay was often an isolated experience. A 1955 special report to the *New York Times* detailed how Americans in Asia were "living in a state of splendid isolation from the people who are their hosts." The article's author described how in the Philippines and Formosa, "the pattern is for America's to lock themselves up in self-contained communities"¹⁶¹ The words "splendid isolation" reveal how the reporter understood American life abroad and in foreign countries. The assumption was

that Americans lived at overseas military bases in splendid coastal areas with American amenities, isolated from the poor, noisy, and dirty communities of the host nation that abetted the base. In hindsight, it is unsurprising that American civilians and military personnel structured their lives around the familiar sonic and domestic social infrastructure of a naval base. The Navy provided inadequate preparation for families transitioning to a new overseas duty station, and the sources that did exist emphasized on-base living. Resources like *The Navy Wife*, *Welcome Aboard* guides, and DoD *Pocket Guides* promoted a distinct American life apart from that of the host nation. The DoD and military family services created these guides for military personnel, wives, and family members to prepare for their lives at a new overseas duty station. A 1966 *Navy Wife* edition urged wives to “be respectful of the customs of the people, particularly religious observances,” to not “insult or criticize their views,” and to “observe, further, their customs as to dress.”¹⁶² Although the guide’s authors presented these and other suggestions as ways to learn from and engage with a host nation’s culture, the guides read as a list of “dos” and “do nots.” The guide’s sometimes read as warnings and encouraged military wives and families to choose a more isolated life on base when stationed overseas.

Cynthia Enloe argues that a military wife “lives in a social world deliberately insulated from the ‘real world.’”¹⁶³ Enloe writes that the social isolation military wives experienced cut them off from support networks outside the scope of a military base or community, placing these women’s lives at the mercy of the military. The 1966 *Navy Wife* edition also cautioned that in the Philippines, “owing to the somewhat isolated area of some of the bases, U.S. personnel lead a close-knit life that involves considerable family-type social

entertaining. There are active clubs for officers, chief petty officers, and enlisted men on all bases.”¹⁶⁴ The splendid isolation of on-base life was not always a choice but a geographic reality. The combination of physical distance and extensive on base activities encouraged an atmosphere of cultural detachment from the host nation and domestic idealism. Americans living at Subic Bay had access to Olongapo City next to the base, but other places like Manila or Baguio City were further away and more difficult to access. I also think that in each of these descriptions of isolation there is a suggestion of quiet, silence, and passivity, as if a secluded life equates to a silent one. Susan Sontag argued that “there is no such thing as empty space,” that “to look at something which is “empty” is still to be looking, still to be seeing something – if only the ghosts of one’s own expectations.”¹⁶⁵ Adapting Sontag’s phrasing results in the parallel “to listen to silence, is still to be listening.” The extent that military families experienced isolation does not correspond to a sterile, “contained,” “locked up,” or silent existence. Reporters and historians may not have listened to these overseas communities but by listening obliquely I found a lively sonic culture and an acoustemolgy of military domesticity.

The above passages from the *Navy Wife* also described the officer and enlisted clubs on base, what was called “family-type entertaining.” The 1955 *New York Times* piece made this point almost word-for-word. The article’s author described how “the social life revolves around “at home” entertaining, American clubs and official parties.”¹⁶⁶ In sponsoring these on-base clubs, the Navy encouraged sailors stationed at Subic and those in port for liberty or repairs to use their leisure time on at base clubs or at home with family members and neighbors. The emphasis of on-base domestic social activity reflected sovereignty and

political issues concerning the presence of U.S. bases and service members in the Philippines. Since the mid-1950s, the Navy's leadership at Subic Bay engaged in a public relations battle with the Philippine press to promote positive relations, limit illicit behaviors, and secure American security. The Navy wanted to keep American military personnel and civilians "together for the sake of operational efficiency" and to minimize crimes committed by Americans against Filipinos, thus bolstering America's image in the Philippines for long-term relations.¹⁶⁷ This personnel surveillance, however, also prevented intercultural understanding and encounters between Americans and Filipinos – between supposed allies. The *New York Times* piece warned that "the prevailing status quo thus breeds mutual ignorance and prevents the kind of "grass roots" understanding that seems essential if the United States is to succeed in winning the allegiance of Southeast Asia."¹⁶⁸ Protecting Americans living abroad in the Philippines concerned Subic Bay's leadership. In the early 1970s, for example, the Navy had to worry about a series of attacks by Filipino "banca pirates" against Americans leisure sailing or fishing in Subic Bay, attacks and shootings against base guards, and an increase in robberies off base.¹⁶⁹ Restricting Americans to on-base life when possible better guaranteed personal safety, although Americans and Filipinos committed many crimes on base, including a 1963 robbery of an Enlisted Men's Club.¹⁷⁰ Naval leadership at Subic Bay thus had multiple reasons to organize and sponsor music, entertainment, and recreation programs to structure life at the base. Investing in sonic domesticity helped Subic Bay's leaders domesticate the base's sailors and civilians.

Despite these examples of American isolation, historian Donna Alvah argues that overseas isolation narratives fail to represent the range and extent of mundane interactions

between Americans and host nation people. She writes that, “imagining families in military communities abroad as living in hermetic “little Americas” or golden ghettos” denies the impact, whether positive or negative, of their presence in host countries. Even supposedly self-contained military communities were not sealed off from local peoples.”¹⁷¹ American service members and their families at Subic Bay formed relationships and had sonic experiences with Filipinos on base and off base in Olongapo, which I focus on in the following chapter. Unlike Alvah’s focus on West Germany, Japan, and Okinawa, the U.S.-Philippine military history is more complicated. In *Unofficial Ambassadors*, Alvah shows that U.S. political and diplomatic leaders thought that military and other service families living overseas impacted American foreign policy by projecting a soft-power domesticity that tempered the armed service’s hard-power militarization. Finding a balance between soft and hard power brought military families, wives, and domestic life into post-World War II American geopolitical decision-making. U.S. civil defense efforts peaked in the late 1950s, and Alvah describes that the ambassadorial importance of the military family also waned abroad during the 1960s as the Vietnam War, anti-base, and anti-colonial movements soured many host nations on the continued presence of U.S. military forces.¹⁷² The Navy’s leadership at Subic Bay during the 1960s faced similar struggles in managing everyday relationships and isolation that was part of base life and culture.

Changes to post-World War II women’s roles and geopolitical competition influenced U.S. Cold War cultural narratives that imagined American domesticity competing with the Soviet Union’s domestic standards. Susan M. Hartman writes that, “In many ways, the Cold War operated to sustain traditional gender roles and inhibit change. McCarthyism,

the most obvious domestic manifestation of the Cold War, suppressed dissent and reform impulses among women as well as men.”¹⁷³ Hartman, Alvah, and Enloe show that gender roles for men and women within the U.S. military during the Cold War – including families that lived on military bases – were more strict than in civilian communities. The division of labor was clear: men served the country while women served the family. The way overseas military bases, military wives, and U.S. Cold War culture intersected is a rich context to study how sound factored into domestic life on American military bases in the Philippines.

Navy Wives and Families

Military scholars and critics write increasingly about military wives and families. Works devoted to military families tend toward statistics-based social science collections or works that focus on how the military integrated and received women within the U.S. armed forces.¹⁷⁴ I follow the example of Maria Hohn and Seungsook Moon, however, who addressed women, gender, and sexuality in the context of overseas U.S. militarization. Their collection emphasizes that critical perspectives of the U.S. military come from outside military history, typically “feminist scholars who explore the gendered working of the military and the conditions of women and sexual minorities in it.”¹⁷⁵ I approach this research also as an outsider to military history, and I hope to add a new critical perspective to the existing scholarship on women and the military. Sources I read originating from the U.S. Navy tried to aggregate women, domesticity, sound, and music into one easily digestible systematic category of overseas military life. This organizing reduced the collective impact that those people and forces had on base life and history.

Incorporating the experiences, roles, and expectations of military wives, families, and other dependents into narratives of Subic Bay can expand who that history represents. Studies and conversations about the history, impact, and legacies of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines revolve around two familiar archetypes: the exploited Filipina hostess, and the lustful, white American GI. These stock characters appear disproportionately more often in histories of twentieth century U.S.-Philippine military relations compared to other people also part of that history. U.S. Navy personnel displayed a keen self-awareness of this binary and lampooned that metanarrative; they displayed gendered and racialized attitudes towards their relationships with Filipinas. The materials part of that metanarrative depicted the worst of American sailors and their attitudes towards women in the Philippines. In the 1963 Cubi Point yearbook, a series of cartoons in a noir-version of Subic Bay featured sinister, zombie-like sailors lusting after the bodies of Filipinas, while U.S. shore patrol officers grin knowingly, holding the sailors back. The cartoons have not aged well and contain uncomfortable representations of both Americans and Filipinas. In the figure below, the woman – presumably sexually available – looks back coyly with her exaggerated bust and stride while the sailor clenches his fists and gawks after her as the clock nears midnight and his leave pass expires. His look and body language convey violent aggression and a desire to possess the woman.



Figure 3-1 1962-1963. *A sailor's interpretation of the GI-Filipina dynamic.*¹⁷⁶

These kinds of portrayals, however, did not represent all relationships between Americans and Filipinos. One way to expand that binary is to investigate the individuals and systems that existed adjacent to the Filipina-GI binary. Cynthia Enloe proposes that, “to be a skeptically critical, feminist-informed military analyst requires not just that one explores the multi-layered politics of masculinities. It calls upon us to become energetically curious about women’s carried and dynamic roles vis-à-vis the constructions and reconstructions of masculinity.”¹⁷⁷ Enloe challenges scholars to critique structures of military masculinity and recognize the diversity of experience within different groups of women who experienced military masculinities; some resisted and pushed back, while some were complicit, oblivious, or unconcerned. Laurie Weinstein and Helen Mederer noted that “wives also help to reproduce the military culture. Wives who perform their expected domestic and public duties are role models for other wives; indeed, some wives bluntly criticize those women who do not service their husband’s careers.”¹⁷⁸ Weinstein and Mederer describe how military wives

were important to the external and internal politics of the U.S. military. The U.S. military expected wives to be the domestic arm of a military man's life and career. Even though the U.S. military considered and treated wives as dependents of servicemen, their labor and support of their husbands meant the job was a two-person career. Anne Bricoe Pye and Nancy B. Shea's also made this point in their 1965 edition *The Navy Wife*. Addressing other Navy wives, they wrote that the book "points out your responsibilities and the ways in which you can aid your husband in making a success of his naval career," and explain that while "there are many drawbacks to a life in the Navy, "many may be overcome while others simply have to be tolerated."¹⁷⁹ While clearly written with good intentions, *The Navy Wife* prepares and assures wives that their roles are secondary to their husbands, and that their struggles should be expected and borne silently. The Navy expected wives to provide support domestically, behind-the-scenes at Subic Bay in the 1960s. Just as David Ball's wife was in the background of my interview with him, the Navy often addressed Subic Bay welcome guides to the military men and not their wives or families. Guides created for Navy wives differed from the ones issued to sailors. Wives were afterthoughts, secondary to servicemen. One 1969 guide suggested that, "If your wife is coming to Subic, she may want to correspond with the wives club she will be associated with."¹⁸⁰ Even before arriving, the Navy expected servicemen to set social and spatial boundaries for their wives. Distinct social areas for men and women living at Subic Bay demonstrates how gender, space, and sound interacted and established the base's culture.

Examples from this welcome guide show how labor, space, and social life differed for men and women within the U.S. military. This reflected the state of gender relations

during the early years of the Cold War. The Navy expected wives to belong to a social club on base - “she *will* be associated with.” The phrase was a command. A polite one masked as a friendly suggestion, but it was a command to sailors to make sure their wives joined the appropriate group, in the appropriate space, and behaved in the appropriate manner. Wives maintained their own social circles apart from their husbands serving in the Navy and communicated through a separate network of communications within that sphere. The guide also reveals that Navy wives had their own physical spaces such as the women’s gym, in addition to social clubs and dependent-specific career paths. The images below from a Subic Bay welcome guide for servicemen, wives, and families unambiguously presented what was appropriate behavior for men and women at the base. Men went shooting while women went shopping. Men went outside while women stayed inside.



Figure 3-2 Gendered recreation and space at Subic Bay. Men went shooting and women went shopping, circa 1960s.¹⁸¹

Relationships between U.S. sailors and Filipinas off base further complicated explicit gender roles and spaces for Navy wives at Subic Bay. Before World War II, Olongapo City earned a reputation for prostitution, coded as nightlife, recreation, or entertainment. By the

1950s, U.S. sailors knew Olongapo for its extensive nightclub circuit and its Filipina “hostesses” who entertained American sailors and marines. The prostitution industry around Subic Bay created a division between U.S. Navy wives and Filipinas; Navy wives competed with exotic, desirable, and youthful Filipinas. U.S. Navy cruise books reflect the real and imagined availability and desirability of Filipinas. Reflecting on their 1967 cruise and their stop in the Philippines, the cruise book editors of the *USS Cacapon* wrote how, “The Village [Olongapo] has its share of friendly females and every sailor has a girlfriend (and every girlfriend had six sailors)...they have a natural rhythm and talent for dancing, so the Village is where you usually find yourself.”¹⁸² These comments demonstrate colonial assumptions about innate Filipino musicality, and U.S. sailors’ casual stance and familiarity with Subic Bay and Olongapo’s prostitution industry. Referring to Olongapo as “the Village” further denigrated Filipinas and the Philippines: Olongapo was a packed, populated, and busy city, not a remote, tropical village filled with available women. The number of Amerasian children living in Olongapo just outside the base gates – many abandoned by their American fathers – fueled fears of infidelity. The Navy’s passive tolerance of prostitution compounded these insecurities, despite official naval policy that prevented sailors from meeting prostitutes and the Navy’s shore patrol roaming the city’s streets.

Implicit in the remarks from the *USS Cacapon*’s editors is a narrative about the naturally occurring musical abilities and sensibilities of Filipinos. This 1967 description was not unique; generations of U.S. military members stationed in the Philippines considered Filipino musicians to be exceptional musicians and performers and capable of incredible displays of sonic mimicry. The trope resulted from the U.S.-Philippine colonial relationship.

Filipino musicians adapted to life under the U.S. colonial administration and embraced the entertainment economies based around the growing presence of American citizens and service members in the Philippines. Filipino musicians performed near-perfect recreations of favorite and popular records and performances. Christine Balance wrote about the influx of “American sounds” to the Philippines during the twentieth century and noted that musical mimicry was a means of survival, a way to earn a living for Filipino musicians.¹⁸³

Considering the wide-spread prostitution at Subic Bay, it is not surprising that Navy wife Florence Ridgley Johnson emphasized the high quality of on-base housing while also encouraging wives and families to remain on base whenever possible.¹⁸⁴ While safe and comfortable housing mattered, a family home also kept sailors and marines from leaving the base for Olongapo. Working and living on base gave sailors few reasons to leave. Ridgley Johnson had a bias against the Philippines as a duty station and included other tacit warnings for wives about the Philippines as a duty station. Even benign concerns such as climate and weather contained a bias against the Philippines. Ridgley Johnson felt that, “The climate [in the Philippines] is, to my mind, thoroughly miserable. But it is an interesting place...”¹⁸⁵ The unresolved tension of U.S.-Philippine colonialism is evident in her differing descriptions about Hawaiian and Philippine climates: “the climate [in Hawai’i] is just about perfect; pleasantly warm in summer and just pleasantly cool in winter.”¹⁸⁶ Although they share a similar climate, Ridgley Johnson celebrated Hawai’i’s, “just about perfect,” and disparaged the Philippines, a “thoroughly miserable” place. Ridgley Johnson’s critique of the Philippines has to do with more than just the climate. It was a distant duty station in a foreign country, and the rumors in the military spoke of a lively prostitution industry that ensnared sailors

easily. Compounding these concerns, the Navy encouraged sailors to take unaccompanied orders to the Philippines during the 1960s, with the command explaining that, “Limited exchange and commissary privileges together with the lack of suitable hotels in Olongapo discourage “waiting wives” with husbands in Vietnam from coming to Subic Bay. Because of the unsatisfactory housing situation, personnel ordered to Subic Bay for duty are encouraged to take an unaccompanied 12-month tour.”¹⁸⁷ Navy wives saw their husbands deploying to Vietnam and the Philippines, knowing of Subic Bay’s reputation. Like the welcome guides, these naval documents asserted control over “waiting wives,” who weren’t important enough to naval personnel to be stationed close to their husbands. They were to wait patiently and silently, without complaint. Despite additional housing facilities planned and built during the 1960s, there was always a constant shortage of spaces for the thousands of Americans affiliated with the base. Domestic space was a key means for how sailors, wives, and families stationed at Subic Bay understood and navigated their world.

Military Suburbia Overseas

During the early Cold War years, Subic Bay ran out of housing units as thousands of military wives and children joined their husbands and fathers at overseas. At the close of 1967, for example, 626 families lived on base, while 701 families lived off-base. The command history of that year detailed that the on-base housing waiting list was 7-10 months for officers, and 14-18 months for enlisted.¹⁸⁸ Military planners adapted suburban subdivisions to fit military standards of uniformity and the image of domestic utopia the military hoped would attract a new generation of career service members in the new all-volunteer armed forces. In *Crabgrass Frontier*, historian Kenneth Jackson wrote that “suburbia

has become the quintessential physical achievement of the United States; it is perhaps more representative of its culture than big cars, tall buildings, or professional football.”¹⁸⁹ Just as military families abroad “articulated an ideal of families as “unofficial ambassadors,” suburban-style family housing represented American domestic modernity overseas, an architectural-capitalist posture that manifested during the famous Nixon-Khrushchev kitchen debate in 1959, when the two opposing leaders refracted the merits of capitalism versus communism through the prism of the family kitchen.¹⁹⁰ Matthew Farish writes that the Kitchen Debate reflected the politics of Cold War geography, including the “extensive links between global diplomacy and domestic spaces,” and writes that “Nixon and Khrushchev reaffirmed stereotypical gendered roles” in their relation to gendered domestic spaces.¹⁹¹ Kitchen appliances, house fences, and other domestic infrastructure – built to accommodate the new families and sailors stationed in the Philippines –mediated the politics of sonic-domesticity at Subic Bay. Subdivisions, recreation centers, and clubs also physical forms that housed and transmitted the sounds of domestic life. Sound and space shared an intimate relationship at Subic Bay, with sound giving shape to space as much as space gave shape to sound and listening practices. The map below, included in a Navy-sponsored Subic Bay welcome guide for American families moving to Subic Bay, outlined the spatial differences between domestic spaces, industrial spaces, and combat spaces on base. The Navy established the base’s industrial areas, like the ship repair and refuel facilities, along the piers and docks on the bay’s shore, while many of the domestic spaces including family housing units, commissary, and schools were further inland and removed from the spaces of military-industry. The map also conveys Subic Bay’s size, with the outlying domestic spaces several miles away from the busier and more crowded industrial work areas. The map

America's outposts are similar to small towns, with offices, homes, shopping centers, schools, parks, fire stations, and industrial areas. Moreover, these outposts, whether controlled by the Air Force, Army, or Navy, look surprisingly alike. Underlying these familiar facades are familiar policies concerning design and construction that apply to outposts worldwide. These policies, in turn, reflect sociocultural norms exported across the globe by designers locked on a blueprint of their version of America.¹⁹³

Gillem describes overseas military suburbs as the U.S. military's version of small-town American suburbs, or at least, the outline of such places. These were places populated by Americans who lived in domestic spaces that mimicked homes they left behind (or aspired to live in) in the United States. Gillem writes that these communities represented and manifested existing problems in basing the U.S. military overseas. He argues that the choices made designing and planning these overseas, on-base communities demonstrates a politics of space that aligns with the politics of sound and of empire. Gillem writes that, "like the maps, the thinking about empire's impacts stops at the fencelines. The piercing sounds of an F-16 or the plumes from underground oil leaks, however, do not stop when they reach the edge of the map."¹⁹⁴ While Gillem critiques the side effects of imperial spatial ambitions from a moral and transnational geopolitical perspective, the politics of space and sound at Subic Bay played out at a micro-level as well. Although the Navy attempted to erect clear spatial and sonic boundaries between domestic and military life, the two spheres overlapped in the limited areas available at the base. The clearest example of this is the location of the base's enlisted and officer clubs, amid the industrial ship repair areas near the piers.¹⁹⁵

Subic Bay's leadership made further efforts to distinguish the sound worlds of families stationed overseas, and the sailors passing through Subic for liberty, refueling, or repairs. David Ball remembered how the Navy used cattle cars to transport sailors from the piers across base to Magsaysay Gate, the main point of access for sailors venturing out into Olongapo. He described how semi-trucks towed cattle carriers, and that coming back from town, "there were lots of drunks on there, lot of fights on there. People were thrown off. Talk about noise – that was noise."¹⁹⁶ David's experience demonstrates how the Navy herded sailors like cattle to control their bodies and their ability to make sound, to make sure their noisy and unruly behavior passed through but didn't violate the transplanted suburban images and sounds of an orderly, military-sonic domesticity considered important for base moral and social life. David recalled the disruptive sounds of sailors packed into the cattle cars and the uncouth behavior part of those trips, behavior antithetical to how the Navy wanted family housing and community areas structured and sounded. To solidify the division between family life and bachelor life, the base command opened Grande Island in March 1966 as a rest and recuperation site for U.S. service members. Repurposed and capable of hosting several thousand sailors, the island resort offered food, beaches, a golf course, movie theater, and other leisure activities (see image below). The Navy's hope for Grande Island was that it would help to establish better relations with the local Philippine government by siphoning off the flood of sailors that visited Olongapo. This was the same year the Navy's land lease for Subic shortened to twenty-five years and when the Navy began constructing a fuel pipeline from Subic to its neighboring inland installation, Clark Air Force Base.¹⁹⁷ The Navy found many reasons to maintain a positive relationship with the local community as politics and sounds changed. The Navy responded to criminal, sonic, cultural,

and geopolitical threats by implementing new security policies, which also affected the base's many sonic cultures. The image below of Grande Island displays the physical and sonic layout of the island. The island's design was like the base's, with residential areas – the hotel – away from the shore. Grande Island and the Naval Reservation differ, however, in that instead of industrial sounds and infrastructure dominating the shoreline, recreation and entertainment facilities stretch along the water's edge and extended into the bay. Grande Island resonated with the sounds of military-domesticity – basketball courts, water sports, and musical performances at the island's theater. Grande Island was a suburb of Subic Bay – a space away from the built-up industrial work areas of the base. Sailors visited Grande Island to rest, play, and recover, and the sonic and spatial layout of the resort defined their experiences. It was an acceptable place for men to engage in a masculine version of domesticity.

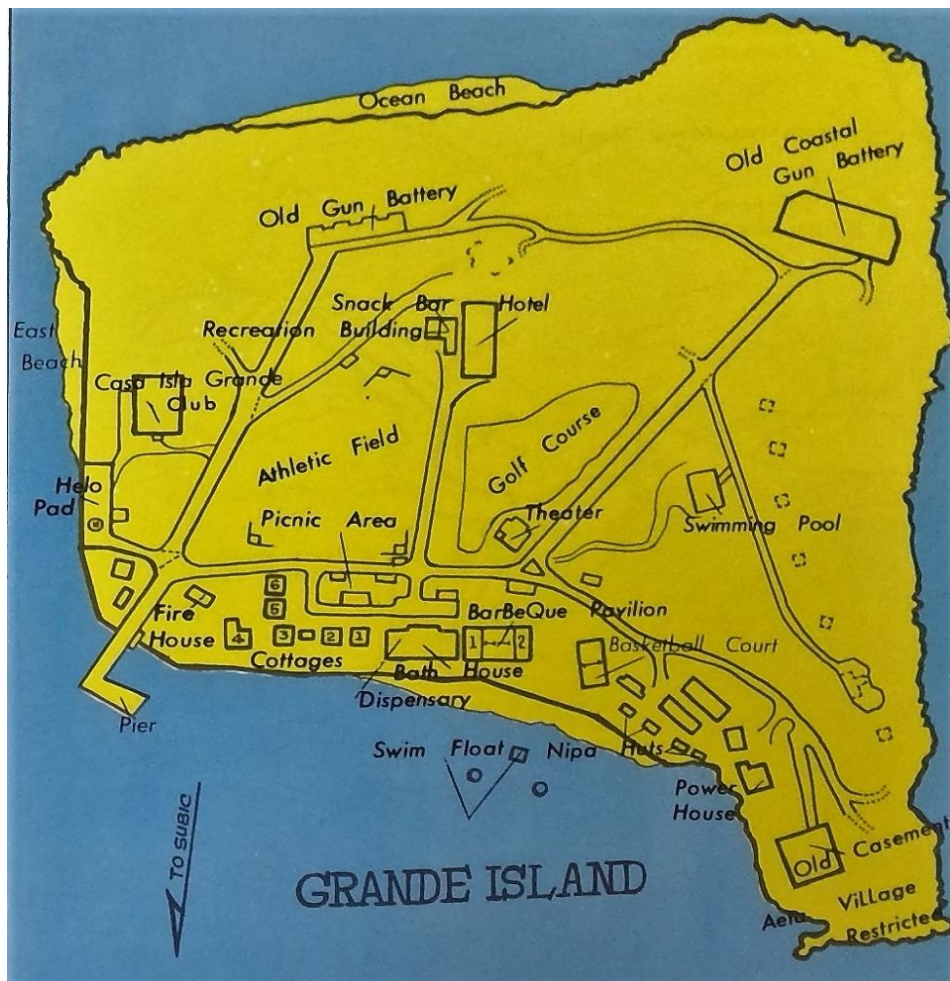


Figure 3-3 Map of Grande Island, Subic Bay, RP.¹⁹⁸

Back on base, there were family housing and residential areas at different areas of the base. Surviving Navy-issued family guides to Subic Bay describe some of the specific dimensions and features of base housing units. For enlisted and officer families, “the housing units are two-story duplex units with two and three bedrooms. Complete with large screened porches, ample closet space, and equipped kitchens and bathrooms, the government housing is quite pleasant.”¹⁹⁹ These housing complexes were larger, well-furnished, in safe neighborhoods, filled with modern appliances. The image below is an example of an enlisted family housing unit at Subic Bay. The photo is from a 1969 welcome

guide to Subic Bay endorsed by the base's commander and written for servicemen and their families. It was part of the guide's "Housing, Shopping, Recreation" section and conveyed to arriving families they would be safe and happy stationed at Subic Bay. The guide's on-base housing subsection is several paragraphs long, but the image immediately demonstrates what military families could expect. To appeal to military-domesticity and family needs, the guide's authors presented readers with an image of what their home could look like, and was a way make families feel welcomed.



Figure 3-4 Enlisted Men's Family Housing Duplex, Binictican Base Housing Area.²⁰⁰

The duplex appears to be set apart from other units with space and vegetation around it and doesn't look like a busy or noisy area. The guide reinforced that sense of quiet and explained that housing areas "are just a few miles from the heart of the base," which also demonstrates the base's scale.²⁰¹ The photograph's angle conveys quiet, safety, and solitude. These units were considered "quite pleasant" compared to the typical apartments and homes available to sailors and their families off base in Olongapo. The suburban family

home was an important symbol of U.S. civil defense during the 1950s and 1960s, and the guide's description of Subic Bay's on base family housing echoes those ideas about security, what Farish described as "the comforting bases of family and Fortress Main Street," or "suburban citadels."²⁰² As developers and politicians connected suburbia and safety there was proportionate rhetoric decrying America's urban areas, the "noir worlds" of the "degraded city," rife with danger, crime, and violence.²⁰³

Subic Bay was neither a decaying noir city nor a suburban citadel, and the sounds of domestic life and housing contrast with assumptions about militarization and sound that focus on the base's industrial sounds or military bands. An ear turned towards military domesticity and suburbia complicates that narrative. Environmental historian Peter Coates argued this point: "Attention to the sounds of work and play in the suburbs can rectify the bias of sound historians of the past century toward the noises resulting from production processes in an urban setting."²⁰⁴ Coates writes that a sonic turn towards suburban environments widens the scope of sounds and silence available to scholars for study. Kevin Archer further expands the scope of the suburban-domestic soundscape and focuses on domestic interiors. He writes about how "kitchen work comes with immersive sound: machines hum and sometimes roar; the radio blasts through static; humans must shout to be heard."²⁰⁵ Studying suburban sonic interiors like kitchens or backyards challenges sound studies' urban favoritism. Subic Bay's suburban exteriors and interiors also do this work. At Subic Bay in the 1960s, the base's suburban-domestic environment included family and bachelor housing, two community centers, horse stables, a skeet shooting course, 18-hole golf course, four movie theaters, three bowling alleys, two community carpentry and other

hobby shops, and the nearly dozen officer, enlisted, and ladies clubs for live music and performances.²⁰⁶ These distinct sound spaces were geographically near the industrial and combat-focused areas of the base, but removed culturally and socially. By 1967, Subic Bay's leaders felt that domestic housing issues and their effect on daily life and morale were "the Base's number one internal problem." Oversight and control over American activities became an issue with more dependents living off base than on. The command stressed that the housing shortage "remains a serious detriment to the well-being and morale of a great number of officers."²⁰⁷ Subic Bay had a limited number of on-base family and bachelor housing units throughout the 1960s, despite the Navy's efforts to install more units.

Music, Entertainment, and Recreation

Music, entertainment, and recreation were important aspects of Subic Bay's sonic domesticity. Throughout the 1960s, the Navy promoted recreation activities and added new facilities, creating an extensive entertainment and recreation infrastructure on base. In Charles Moskos Jr.'s preface to *Families in the Military System*, he wrote about how the onset of the Cold War era and an all-volunteer American military brought significant changes to the U.S. military received and treated military families and their place in the armed forces. He wrote that, "In the late 1960s, the services also began to institute various community and family agencies designed to increase further the range of services for family needs."²⁰⁸ A 1969 *Welcome* guide for arriving sailors and their families made an overt link between sound, domesticity, and the military, and exemplifies the changes Moskos described: "there's a touch of home waiting for you in Subic Bay's many clubs and social groups. Big name entertainers are often featured in club floorshows. Special parties and game nights are

included with informal dining and dancing.”²⁰⁹ The guide attempts to welcome sailors and their families by emphasizing that Subic Bay offered a range of domestic events, activities, and spaces like those families left behind when they moved to the Philippines.

In another 1969 base guide for arriving sailors and their families, the Navy’s Special Services division made a rare venture to the poetic. The guide’s writers wrote that, “When the lights dim at the Station or Cubi Theaters a variety of entertainment is yours. A good movie, USO show, the best of the P.I. entertainers, U.S. entertainers or major stage productions by the Little Theater Group are samples of the things that can be seen.”²¹⁰ This passage describes a lively and varied entertainment and music culture at Subic Bay, reveals that Americans and Filipinos interacted regularly, and suggests how live performances affected morale. The section continues, and the writer’s noted that “an assortment of every type and kind of music is presented by the various performers, both professional and semi-professional, in the USO shows.”²¹¹ The base’s special services worked with the USO to provide “every type and kind of music” on base, an appeal to please the multiple generations and demographics of Americans living at Subic Bay. Historians frame history of the Vietnam War era of the 1960s around the pervasiveness of rock n’ roll music and culture. While young American combat troops in Vietnam (with an average age of nineteen) favored new music of the 1960s, the rock n’ roll narrative, does not account for the thousands of career service members of previous generations whose tastes did not always match the countercultural-edge of the combat youth fighting in Vietnam. Sailors and Marines stationed or taking liberty at Subic Bay heard a much broader scope of live and recorded musical performances.

Some of the specific performances service members heard and saw at Subic Bay in the 1960s included a production of “Guys and Dolls,” the “Chordsmen” barbershop quartet, “The Swinging Five,” a folk, blues, and rock band, and “The Carmen D’Oro Show,” a “Latin American revue.”²¹² Subic Bay also hosted several of Bob Hope’s famous USO Christmas Tours, including one in 1962 held on the deck of the *USS Kitty Hawk*. Formal and informal bands part of or formed on U.S. ships were also regular performers on and off ship when in port at Subic. Such bands included the Command Carrier Division (COMCARDIV) band, the COMCARDIV 7, deployed with the *Kitty Hawk* during their 1962-1963 WESTPAC cruise, the ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) Group FIVE Band from the *USS Kearsage*.²¹³ Cruise book photos and descriptions in the cruise describe how these bands were malleable; informal Navy bands performed a changing repertoire on ships and on shore in the Philippines. The physical range of sonic domesticity went beyond the spaces and structures on shore and was part of ship life on ships when ported in Subic.²¹⁴

Apart from the live performances happening on base, the Navy installed a state-of-the-art music room with modern listening and recording stations in one of the base’s libraries. This music room contained “a 300 volume tape library and 16 recording stations” and “27 listening stations,” with channel selections that included “Broadway Shows, Classical, Jazz and Blues, Popular and Western.”²¹⁵ The music room was another way the Navy promoted military-domesticity through sound. Installing the music stations provided on-base opportunities to listen to music without leaving base or having to purchase a radio. Again, the range of musical styles was broad and meant to appeal to younger, single enlisted sailors, as well as more senior officers and families from all ranks and multiple regions and

demographics. Navy-issued welcome guides for sailors included images of the music room to promote services the base offered. The image below shows sailors listening intently. The music room was an important sonic-domestic addition to the base, and welcome guides usually featured the music room. When I asked Navy veteran Jim Pope about musical hits from his time at Subic in the late 1950s and early 1960s, he didn't name anything specific. Jim explained that he listened to Top 40 and country-western hits broadcast through commercial and Armed Forces radio services. Jim was a submarine sonar technician and he felt that sailors in that role gained a discerning and appreciative ear for sound, and for silence. He described the importance of silence in him when docking. Jim remembered that quiet moments were rare in a submarine, and that you "always relished your silence." What Jim observed about sound and silence adds another layer to the sound space of Subic Bay – the quiet moments of introspection.



Figure 3-5 U.S. sailors listening to music in the base library's music room, 1967.²¹⁶

The Navy also organized performances for sailors, submariners, and marines arriving in port. Liberty brought refreshing and comforting sonic changes to their ears after the monotony of the sea or the chaos of the battlefield. Subs and ships sometimes contained jukeboxes or pianos. Ships relied on band members part of the cruise or other sailors who were musicians for musical entertainment while at sea. Veteran submariner Jim Pope told me that, “When you come into port, why, you relish listening to the music and the different sounds.” For Jim, those sounds were Filipino country-western cover bands. Music revived his ears and his spirits with the sounds of the United States, and of his home in Oklahoma. Jim also described a robust live performance schedule at the on-base clubs, which featured live music and other entertainment, including Top 40 or country-western. The Navy’s family and recreation services and the USO also provided a range of on base programming. Subic

housed twelve officer or enlisted social clubs, in addition to the family and youth recreation centers and school auditoriums. The clubs booked Filipino cover bands who adjusted their repertoires and styles as generations and tastes changed; racially segregated clubs also affected song choices. By 1970, the two officer's clubs at Subic Bay each hosted their own house band. A guide to Subic Bay described how "floor shows are featured on the weekends and happy hours, when drinks are 15c each, are held several times a week."²¹⁷ Music was a regular aspect of on base social life, and provided structure to daily life and to the officer's clubs on a weekly basis.

The base clubs also hosted outside performances, a mix between local and national Philippine and American musicians and performers. In 1967, for example, the Cubi Point's Chief Petty Officer (CPO) club and the Kalayaan Officer's Club featured vocalist Bobby Gonzales, the "Philippine Ambassador of Songs."²¹⁸ Gonzales performed at U.S. military clubs in the Pacific, and by 1967 attempted to break into larger-scale productions in the United States. The group recently returned to the Philippines from Las Vegas and a stage performance alongside Shirley MacLaine. Acts like Bobby Gonzales attracted a large audience at both on-base clubs as his international reputation expanded. That same year, the base's local newspaper *Subic Bay News* advertised a charity performance sponsored by the Subic CPO Club Dance Troupe held at the Cubi CPO Club the San Miguel CPO Club. The brief article and accompanying images depict two Filipina dancers rehearsing the "Sua-Sua," described as a "Moroland courtship dance," while the second image shows the "Itik-Itik folk dance" and featured Filipina and white American women, possibly employees of the club, in matching uniforms.²¹⁹ It is not clear from the photo's description who these women were,

maybe spouses, special contractors, performers, or base workers. There is an unseen audience watching the performances. Like the Gonzales example, this charity dance performance demonstrates the cultural impact that the on-base clubs had on local base life. They were social and performance hubs where U.S. sailors, wives, and family members experienced a range of performances. The cases described here stand out because they featured Filipino performers and art forms rather than the American-style house bands of the clubs. This was a moment when Subic Bay's leaders welcomed Filipino music and culture to the base. These performances were ways that Americans and Filipinos interacted and learned about each other's sonic cultures.

The Philippine Ambassador Of Songs

Vocalist Bobby Gonzales who's billed by booking agents as the "Philippine Ambassador of Songs," will be on the Base tomorrow night for two performances.

Cubi Point CPO Club will put the "Ambassador" on stage at 8:30, while the Kailayan Officers Club has scheduled him for 10.

Tony Estrada Promotions




Figure 3-6 Philippine Ambassador of Songs, Bobby Gonzales, 1967.²²⁰



Figure 3-7 Navy wives and local Filipinas dance together at a CPO club, on base. 1967.²²¹

Sound organized community, recreation, and family life at Subic Bay. A 1967 story in *The Admiral's Log*, the school newspaper of Subic Bay's George Dewey High School, detailed a performance by the *USS Bryce Canyon's* Navy band. The 19-piece band "brought down the house with its outstanding interpretations of Herb Alpert's Tiajuana Brass selections," and their "clowning antics and various skits."²²² Earlier that same year, the China Seas EM (Enlisted Men's) Club was "converted from a temporary building to a semi-permanent structure."²²³ And a year later in 1968, the bases's GO-Kart track reopened, "basketball, volleyball and deck shuffleboard courts were built between barracks," builders added new skeet shooting ranges, and "a total of 32 USO shows were presented at Naval Station Theater and NAS Cubi Theater."²²⁴ All of these events describe a dynamic indoor and outdoor musical and recreational sonic culture on base.

Sailors and civilians heard live music and other acts throughout each year, while the base's Special Services division took steps to make entertainment and recreation permanent parts of base culture by building new spaces and expanding older ones. The base was like any other domestic American suburb, with sports fields and courts, stages and community centers, parks and theaters. The image below displays all the base's domestic-recreation services and areas. It maps out the differences between domestic and industrial sound spaces and shows where those spaces overlapped. On the right side, domestic areas were inland and away from the air strip and other industrial areas, which made a clear spatial and sonic distinctions at Cubi Point. The map's middle contains areas furthest from the base's industrial areas, including the base golf course. David remembered that "the golf course was quiet," compared to "where the different ships were, there was always more noise."²²⁵ The left side of the map is where domestic and industrial sound spaces intersected. The O Club and the BOQ tennis court sat alongside industrial machine shops, while the ball field, gyms, and bowling alley were further away. That was the older section of the base. The base was not a silent, sterile place as so many technical and administrative naval documents suggest, but was instead home to U.S. service members, their families, and other civilians who engaged in all manner of sonic activities. For these individuals and communities, military-sonic domesticity structured their lives. At Subic Bay, the manufactured pastoral suburbs connected with the base's industry, military, and logistics sound worlds while also being a world apart.

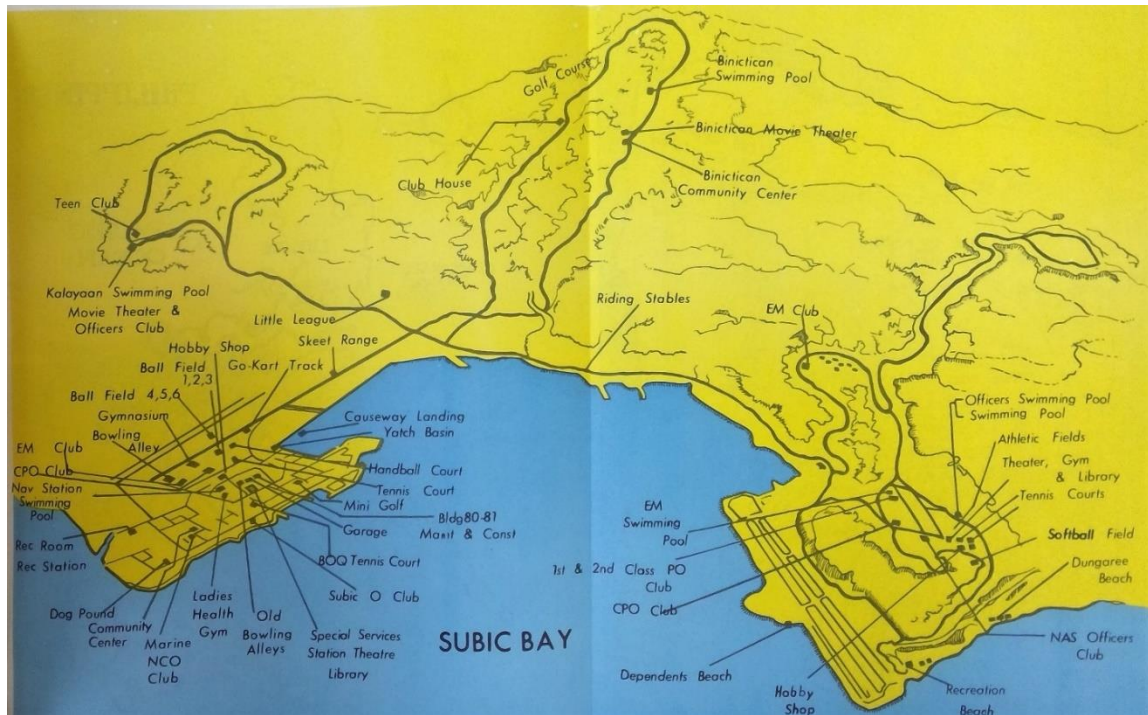


Figure 3-8 Map of entertainment and recreation facilities, Subic Bay, RP.²²⁶

Fiestas and People-to-People

Music is usually the first point considered in studies about sound or sound experiences. Sound studies changed that assumption and opened the humanities to the critical possibilities of non-musical sounds – the ubiquitous, ordinary, or mundane sounds that reflect daily life. Sound studies also draws attention to exceptional events, such as the Fil-Am Fiesta. At times, the Navy deliberately expanded the scale of Subic Bay's domestic-sonic space within the base and outside of its formal boundaries. The U.S. Navy welcomed local Filipino civilians to the base for joint celebrations, while intercultural initiatives such as the People-to-People program put American sailors and civilians out into Filipino communities off base for variety of diplomatic purposes accompanied by music, fanfare, and a swell of people. Providing services and entertainment for military families on base sometimes intersected with the Navy's efforts to promote positive relations between

Americans and Filipinos. The People-to-People was an Eisenhower-era diplomatic effort that aimed to improve and sustain relations with foreign nations. Established under Eisenhower in 1956, the program aimed to “enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural, and humanitarian activities involving the exchange of ideas and experiences directly among peoples of different countries and diverse cultures.”²²⁷ This program was important for the U.S. Armed Forces overseas as each branch sought to establish positive relations with their host nations, like the relationship between Naval Base, Subic Bay and Olongapo City, Philippines. The program emphasized interpersonal and intercultural activities and events, including “international sporting events, musical concerts, hospitality programs, theatrical tours and book drives.”²²⁸

The editors of the *USS Kearsage*’s 1964 WESTPAC cruise book reflected that “the People-to-People program was received with much enthusiasm...painting and building, mixed with entertainment provided rewarding hours of liberty.”²²⁹ Images of sailors off base in Olongapo teaching games to children, repairing and adding to buildings accompany the passage, and one image of a sailor singing and playing a guitar surrounded by Filipino boys. The People-to-People program also had a sonic, musical, and performative component. Sailors on a 1961 WESTPAC cruise aboard the *USS Bon Homme Richard* expressed positivity regarding the program: “The Fil-Am Fiesta and Operation Handclasp both gave the People-to-People program a terrific boost,” and described how “the top attraction at the Fil-Am festival was Manila’s Bayanihan Dance Troupe, with Shirley MacLaine and Paul Newman on hand to share in the festivities.”²³⁰ In both cruise book examples, texts and images demonstrate that music was important to how Americans and Filipinos negotiated

relationships with each other. Music mediated relationships and shaped physical spaces and the overall structure to the Navy's domestic social realm. These examples also show that sonic domesticity was not limited to the base. Sailors were conduits for sound and their charity work off base in Olongapo City extended the range of their sonic and domestic lives.

One of the ways the Navy tried to sustain positive U.S.-Philippine relations was through celebrations on base or participation in local parades and fiestas. In December 1969, for example, the Navy hosted a Fil-Am Fiesta – a celebration “designed to promote friendship and understanding between American servicemen and their Filipino hosts.”²³¹ Olongapo mayor Amelia Gordon endorsed the event which included a parade, events, performances, and exhibitions featuring Americans and Filipinos all raising money for Philippine charities. Naval personnel invited local Filipinos to tour three U.S. ships and one Philippine ship.²³² The Navy's narrative account of this day event is rich in sonic detail: we can hear the boxing matches, cock fights, bingo games, film screenings, carnival, parade, arcade, sporting events, singers and bands – a blend of American and Filipino people and cultural activities. It was a massive event, and the 100,000 Filipino guests tripled base's population. People-to-People musical events also happened organically between U.S. sailors and Filipinos. An image from Cubi Point's 1962-1963 cruise book shows a Filipino musical group – the parola boys, or the lighthouse boys - performing for sailors in a resort area at Grande Island or the naval reservation. While the two musicians perform, a white American sailor plays drums alongside them – perhaps sitting in and showing off. The musicians appear to be concentrating on performing together, while the audience of sailors looks on smiling, shirtless, with drinks in hand, enjoying the music nearby. The photo's place in the

cruise book suggests this was a memorable sonic memory for servicemen stationed at Cubi Point. There are more sailors in the photograph's background, underneath the beach cabana canopies. This is a musical example of sonic-domesticity at Subic Bay, but one designed or organized for servicemen, different from the family-focused sonic-domesticity the Navy also promoted at the base. There were different versions of Navy-sponsored sonic-domesticity at Subic Bay. While Subic Bay welcome guides tended to speak to the needs of military families, cruise books highlighted different kinds of domestic sounds, spaces, and experiences at the base.



Figure 3-9 U.S. sailors listen to the parola boys at Subic Bay while a fellow sailor sits in on drums, circa 1962-1963.²³³

A 1961 *Pocket Guide to the Philippines*, issued by the DoD's Office of Information For The Armed Forces, for sailors and families receiving orders to the Philippines, included

sections about Filipino fiestas and other celebrations. The guide included descriptions of the music and sounds attendees might encounter. The guide described how “music and dancing are features of most Philippine celebrations, and Filipinos have marked talents for both.”²³⁴ The passage continues: “The range of musical interest is broad – from traditional melodies played on primitive instruments to symphonic performances in the larger cities. Romantic songs accompanied by the Spanish guitar are reminders of the heritage of Spain, but you will also hear modern jazz.”²³⁵ Here is another example of American’s assuming information about the inherent abilities of Filipino for music-making, in this example, actual historical moments of rendition in the tropics. This section describes the kinds of musical experiences Americans could encounter in the Philippines. The guide’s tone matches the dated depiction of Filipinos on its cover. A man drives an animal-driven carriage while two women in ornate dresses hold on to the wagon. One wears a crucifix on her neck. The image evokes Cinderella with the carriage and the ball gowns. The artists emphasize the Philippines Spanish-influenced culture, just as the guide’s writers wrote about the influence of Spanish music. The guide foregrounds Spanish influences and history in the Philippines but downplays U.S.-Philippine history. The guide suggests that sailors and families should expect a classical-Spanish Philippine nation, with fancy gowns, guitar music, horse-drawn carts, devout Catholics, and farmers. The guide doesn’t include photos of young people or anything modern. Americans reading this guide to prepare for travel to the Philippines would have assumed that Subic Bay and Olongapo were simple, quiet, agrarian places.

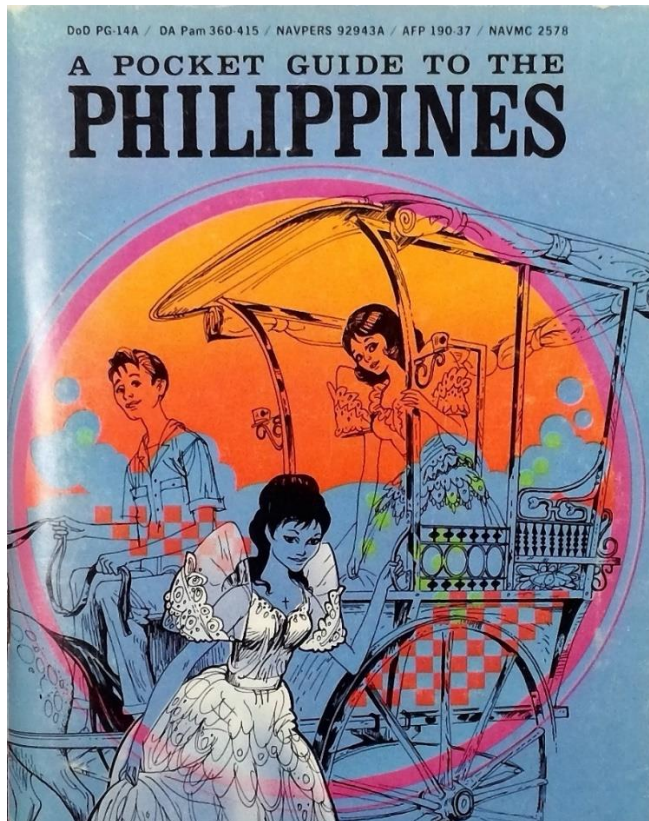


Figure 3-10 DoD-issued *Pocket Guide to the Philippines* Cover.²³⁶

The section reveals pervading attitudes within the U.S. military towards Filipino music and to the culture and people of the Philippines. The passage makes distinctions between Americans and Filipinos – the modernity of jazz contrasted with traditional music and primitive instruments. A sense of Philippine musical and cultural exoticism fascinated the guide’s authors and revealed a derisive stance towards what they perceived as primitive – they were perhaps referring to a kulintang ensemble, or to the kulintang gongs themselves. This guide and others like it show that native Philippine music was a component of Subic Bay’s sphere of sonic-domesticity – a sound space that accounted for music from multiple cultures in a range of domestic settings.

Conclusion: Hearing the Militarized Pastoral

Studying Subic Bay's sonic domesticity reveals what daily life was like for American military families and service members living in the Philippines during the mid-twentieth century. In many regards, their sonic lives paralleled the ones they might have lived in the United States: they listened to the popular music hits of the day, attended live performances, and watched the latest movie releases while their children attended school dances and shouted and cheered for their sports teams. In other ways, their experiences differed. They heard different languages – like Tagalog – experienced native Philippine music and dance and, lived with the sounds of a militarized community. Philippine geography limited their diverse sonic worlds, to specific physical areas – either on base, or nearby off base. Despite the Navy's efforts to surround Navy families with domesticity, they experienced a climate, culture, and country different from their own despite the Navy's attempts to surround them with a familiar feeling of the United States.

During the Cold War, U.S. leaders wanted to spread American influence abroad through the sounds, spaces, and other symbols of overseas American military-domesticity. Military families were part of U.S. geopolitical posturing, in efforts such as Eisenhower's People-to-People program. Gillem writes that, "America's outposts are as much symbols of American power as the tanks and warplanes."²³⁷ Next to the physical and geographic entities that Gillem describes are the more abstract strains of melodies and the sonic mundane, the sounds of domesticity that filled family homes at overseas U.S. military bases in places like Subic Bay. The clichés of stability attached to American Cold War domesticity, however – the era of appliances, packaged dinners, and suburbia – also masked more retrograde

perspectives towards gender roles, violence, and health. In Vernadette V. Gonzalez's walkthrough of a museum display about U.S.-Philippine relations at the former U.S. Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, she reflected that such displays of everyday American life in the Philippines displayed, "the banality of imperialism in the domestic sphere."²³⁸ Gonzalez argues that, "these gendered artifacts of U.S. imperialism tell a story of the quotidian domesticity of military life, and not of its violence, producing U.S. empire as a way of life worthy of nostalgia."²³⁹ I think Gonzalez is correct in arguing that the U.S. remembrance of its relationship with the Philippines is one of historical neglect, a camouflaging of an asymmetrical colonial relationship as one of equals or partners.

Gonzalez's comments also presuppose that American families stationed overseas in the Philippines passively enacted the violence of imperialism. I'm sure that there were many ways in which individual Americans or families mistreated and misunderstood Filipinos, putting forth the worst of the United States and articulating inherited legacies of colonial violence and inequalities. Historical records, newspapers, and testimonies from the mid-twentieth century suggest that there was honest and open-minded outreach from American families at Subic Bay towards the Filipinos living off base, even when mandated by the government. These interactions and relationships developed in the context of sonic and musical moments of leisure time and home life. As I argue in this chapter, military families stationed overseas were physically, sonically, and in some ways culturally removed from the processes of war and violence to which Gonzalez attaches them. Their lives were not directed by the sounds and culture of military industry or combat in the same way that the lives of active duty sailors and marines were structured. They organized their communities

around domestic sounds and activities – radio programs, school musicals, and dinner dances – and domestic spaces, including community centers, sports parks, libraries, and grocery stores.

Many sailors, marines, and airmen stationed in the Philippines were rank-and-file, regular Americans pursuing careers, unwillingly drafted, or seeking a chance for global travel. Most were not frothing white imperialists of the 19th century but were human assets manipulated and placed around the globe by the U.S. military to enforce the era of pax-Americana. There are gradations between individual and institution, between families and service members, and between state policy and those enacting policy. Sound snakes between resolute definitions and demarcated spaces and is a useful source to examine the distinctions between people and institutions. Listening to the domestic sounds of Subic Bay adds a new layer to the complicated history between the U.S. and Philippines. How else can we make room in familiar narratives for military wives and families? For domestic life? Catherine Lutz argued that “ethnographic understandings of militarization’s shaping of all U.S. places seem an urgent project for anthropology,” for such studies will reveal “the seams, fissures, and costs in the otherwise seemingly monolithic and beneficent face of state-corporate-media war making.”²⁴⁰ Following scholars like David Vine, I respond to Lutz’s suggestion. Studies in close listening show the value of studying the historical and militarized sonic mundane, whether the approach is through sound, music, architecture, art, photography, or film.²⁴¹ The functions of music and sound in the context of the U.S. military in the Philippines are easy to dismiss, ignore, or neglect. Mary Talusan argues that music performed by military bands bear the weight of militarization and geopolitics. She writes that “as emblems of the nation,

like national anthems, military bands symbolize modernity, sovereignty, nationhood, and state power.”²⁴² Talusan’s research complements Mark Smith’s argument that sensory interpretations of history are best used to demonstrate particularities of power dynamics and cultural issues, and as a means to invigorate creative writing.²⁴³ Talusan uses the music of military bands to comment on race, imperialism, and militarism in the Philippines. To Talusan’s military bands, I add the totality of domestic sounds and music at Naval Base, Subic Bay. Sonic domesticity branded, defined, and structured base life and how people perceived the U.S. Navy in the Philippines. In this chapter, sound is a conduit through which to study mid-twentieth century American domestic life at an overseas U.S. Naval Base. Using sound to examine American military-domesticity adds to existing narratives and histories of Subic Bay, and adds the experiences of U.S. military families, wives, children, and home life. Like industrial-military sounds, domestic sounds structured space, affected local culture and labor, and occupied an important part of on base life. The domestic was another component of the U.S. Navy’s self-noise at Subic Bay. In many of the examples in this chapter, self-noise extended to the individual realm, beyond enterprise, bureaucratic, or institutional levels of self-noise of infrastructure. I used sound as a framework to comment on gender, militarization, and popular culture during the 1950s and 1960s. Music scholars like Mary Talusan, Jonathan Sterne, J. Martin Daughtry, and Steven Feld show that the sometimes abstract and ubiquitous nature of the sonic world masks how sounds shape a place and arrange social and cultural life.²⁴⁴

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The confluence of American domestic life, sonic life, and military life on foreign territory at Subic Bay is one of the strangest aspects of overseas U.S. militarization in the Philippines. Only in the context of twentieth century U.S. militarization and the age of civil defense is there logic in the physical proximity of domestic pastoralism to military bases. It is paradoxical to think about the coexistence of live bands, mini-golf, and the buzz of high school classrooms in a space dedicated to making and supporting war. In my own life, I passively accept such paradoxes; I am writing this on a private military beach at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton in southern California. I see families swimming, lounging, and laughing while I hear helicopters from the air station completing training exercises nearby. As I drove here from my house on base, I passed the ammunition depot, the AAV lot, and the BAE contracting compound. This is my everyday life. Military base life is normal for me. My life is militarized and so is my wife's. She is deployed in Iraq. I have become more accepting of this way of life during the past 18 months. Spatial and sonic distinctions between the military-industrial complex and my personal domestic life have collapsed into one another. As a military spouse, I have made peace with this life and set aside my ego, and often my interests and goals. While my wife is active duty, the Marine Corps will dictate where I will live and who my neighbors will be. I am happy with where I live, with the benefits to which I have access, and with the financial stability my wife and I enjoy. Like generations of military spouses before me, I still struggle to strike a balance between what the military demands of me and what I want for myself and for my family.

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Chapter IV: City Sounds of Olongapo

Introduction: One-Word Answers

Olongapo's reputation for prostitution became the city's defining cultural reference and dominated narratives about the Navy in the Philippines.²⁴⁵ U.S. Naval leaders at Subic Bay knew about Olongapo's prostitution or "club" economy, yet tacitly accepted the Navy's role in that industry. In a 1961 Subic Bay shore activities book, the pamphlet's writers made numerous references to the booming night club scene and noted how the nightclub industry was one of Olongapo's major economies. The nightclubs, however, depended on sailor's paychecks, thus, the "200 night club establishments in Olongapo depended on the patronage of [U.S. Seventh] Fleet personnel."²⁴⁶ The Navy's inability or unwillingness to curb sailor patronage of nightclubs sustained Olongapo's prostitution industry.

Beside its extensive night club economy, Olongapo was like any other overseas naval port city, filled with the ubiquitous bars, prostitutes, souvenir shops, street vendors, and poverty. Although Subic Bay housed a network of entertainment and recreation services and facilities, sailors often preferred taking liberty in Olongapo City. The Navy granted liberty privileges to sailors to offset intense working conditions. Commanders approved temporary liberty passes that allowed sailors to take time off from their required duties on the base. Liberty was a short-term privilege and commanders expected sailors to uphold the moral and professional standards of the Navy while taking liberty. U.S. sailors hoped to receive liberty passes as they sailed through different port cities during a cruise. Subic Bay became associated with liberty because sailors could walk or take a short drive to Olongapo City. The

image below shows a sailor studying a map of Olongapo outlining where sailors could go while on liberty. Almost the entire map is “out of bounds,” with just two streets available to sailors, Rizal Avenue and Magsaysay Drive.

Although Navy commanders granted sailors temporary reprieves from their duties, sailors remained beholden to the expected standards of behavior. The sailor in the image below wears a uniform, meaning that while on liberty he represents and speaks for the U.S. Navy. He is not taking liberty as an anonymous civilian but as a U.S. servicemember. The Navy placed limits on liberty locations as a safety measure as well. The limits the Navy placed on sailors affected how bars, shops, and nightclubs in Olongapo City marketed and arranged their businesses. Limited to two streets, vendors competed for space and sailor’s patronage. Sound was important for drawing sailors to a storefront, and as the two streets filled with sailors taking liberty leave, local businesses responded sonically.

In this chapter, I write about the U.S Navy’s sonic and cultural relationship with its immediate Filipino neighbors in Olongapo City, Philippines. Jurisdiction of Olongapo resided with Subic Bay’s leaders until the end of 1959, but sailors and marines stationed in the Philippines continued to influence Olongapo’s socio-sonic fabric. Although Olongapo was not located on base, I still consider it part of the Naval reservation at Subic Bay and within the base’s sphere of influence. U.S. Naval acoustic territorialization impacted Olongapo, what Brandon LaBelle defined as a process “in which the disintegration and reconfiguration of space becomes a political process.”²⁴⁷ The Americans and Filipinos traversing the city negotiated and reconfigured everyday space and sound in Olongapo. U.S. sailors became individual units of *territory sounds*, what Michel Chion defined as sounds that

“serve to identify a particular locale through their pervasive and continuous presence.”²⁴⁸

The presence of sailors changed the sonic environment of Olongapo. The Navy’s continued use of Subic Bay ensured sailors visited Olongapo, and the local community adapted its economy and sonic identity to accommodate the ephemeral yet familiar U.S. sailor. The varied geographies of the local grew into politically contested spaces as Americans and Filipinos interacted through sound and music, enacting a form of micro-geopolitics and interpersonal improvisations.

The cruise books featured in this chapter are important but deeply directive documents that captured the tropical imaginary and the U.S. Navy’s history in the Philippines. Cruise books are a genre of U.S. Navy archival materials. They share a format – hardcover books that detail the personnel, history, and mission of each ship. Cruise books usually include photographs of and commentary about each stop along the way. Western Pacific cruise books include sections on Guam, Japan, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Taiwan. They are the Navy’s version of yearbooks, which commemorate shared experiences. Like other yearbooks, Navy cruise books celebrate the good or exciting times while downplaying or ignoring the monotony of life at sea. It is also important to remember that cruise books were edited by sailors for sailors. The books contain language and references appealing directly to sailors. Although they are valuable for the photographs, reflections, and perspectives from rank-and-file U.S. military personnel, they are also uncritical texts that celebrate all aspects of white, male-centric twentieth century U.S. Naval culture, against a backdrop of existing racial and colonial tensions between the United States and the Philippines. They are valuable historical resource for historians and music scholars

but need to be read critically in relation to many other sources and perspectives. The memories and testimonies from sailors found in cruise books reflect what Keith Basso termed interanimation, “when places are actively sensed, the physical landscape becomes wedded to the landscape of the mind, to the roving imagination.”²⁴⁹ The cruise books reflect how U.S. sailors conflated memories, sensory experiences, bravado, and their “roving imaginations” about their time at Subic Bay. In writing their own internal histories, sailors combined their real experiences with the ones they and others imagined happening in the Philippines.



Figure 4-1 U.S. sailor studies the spatial limits of his liberty pass before leaving base, 1966.²⁵⁰

The culture of the Philippines and its history with the U.S. made Olongapo a unique liberty port and duty station compared to other ports like Hong Kong and Yokosuka. Some U.S. sailors found the experience of venturing into Olongapo akin to a military operation in the Philippines, albeit in a new era. The editors of the *USS Kitty Hawk's* 1966-1967 cruise book recounted to the ship's sailors the excitement of taking liberty in the Philippines:

In the face of nostril-shrinking stench, kamikaze jeepney drivers, and shoe shine boys well trained in guerilla tactics, we crossed a river swarming with juvenile con artists diving for our pennies, and established beachheads throughout the city.

“Hilda’s”, “Swan”, “New Pauline’s”, “Copacabana”, and numerous other night spots played host to some of our more spectacular battles.²⁵¹

Instead of battling Spanish, Filipino, or Japanese forces like previous generations of U.S. servicemen, U.S. sailors in Olongapo during the 1960s fought off city sewage, jeepney traffic, local merchants, and venereal disease. The phrase “spectacular battles” in Olongapo’s nightclubs conveys sexual conquest while their “established beachheads” suggests penetration and capture of foreign or enemy territory, or in this instance, bodies. The above passage also describes how these sailors fought against the sensory culture of Olongapo City, against the sounds of street vendors hawking or jeepney engines idling. The sounds of the abounding number of jeepneys – the World War II-era U.S. army transports left behind in the Philippines – made an impression on many U.S. sailors. The jeepney taxi-subculture impressed sailors of the *USS Ticonderoga*, who, passing through Olongapo in 1968 explained that, “the jeepneys of Olongapo are living, snorting labors of love and chrome.”²⁵² In jeepneys, the *USS Ticonderoga's* sailors saw and heard the city’s transportation infrastructure.

Jeepneys formed the backbone of Olongapo's transportation services and were sonic represented Filipino culture. The sputtering jeepneys sonically, symbolically, and physically transported sailors to and from the city and base. Jeepneys served as mobile-sonic conduits to and from the mindset of liberty. U.S. sailors encountered, interpreted, and learned about Filipino culture through sounds like jeepney engines in Olongapo. And although the U.S. Navy returned jurisdiction of Olongapo to the Philippine Government in December 1959, the city remained an extension of the Naval base and the base's sonic culture.

U.S. sailors arriving at Subic Bay after a months-long Pacific cruise and looking for entertainment and excitement affected Olongapo's acoustemology. Olongapo was known for "fancy ladies and the musical napalm of the bars," "the faded thin walls of the teetering shacks," where "poverty festers like the open street sewers."²⁵³ The word choice is striking and suggests how U.S. sailors perceived Olongapo's bar and music culture. Sailors remembered the music, the space, and the people as lively, hot, chaotic, exciting, and all-consuming, washing over listeners, dancers, and drinkers, immersing them in an explosive musical experience of the tropics. The house bands provided a soundtrack of release and abandon, rest and relaxation. Sailors serving on different ships in the 1950s and 1960s reproduced themes in their cruise books, like women (and their bodies), music, poverty, and cleanliness. There is not space in these narratives, however, for Olongapo to exhibit sonic or other kinds of social or cultural diversity. Instead, sailors on liberty experienced Olongapo superficially, their expectations of its citizens and spaces cliched and exoticized filtered through a history of occupation and colonialism.

While a sailor's sonic experience of Olongapo happened indoors in bars or nightclubs, others experienced deluges of plein-air sounds. Music, ambient city noises, Filipino voices, livestock, and everyday business overlapped in a mixture of foreign and familiar, the sounds of an anonymous port town with the distinctive flavor of the Philippines. During the *USS Midway's* 1965 WESTPAC cruise, U.S. sailors reacted strongly to the sounds of the city. That year's cruise book described how in Olongapo, "the noise at times was unbearable because of the one thousand AMP stereo sets blasting the tourists in, instead of out," and that "it was that city filled with musical sounds and dusty walks."²⁵⁴ These sonic descriptions of Olongapo depict a city overflowing with sound and music, with huge speaker systems pumping music into the streets, and filled with the distinctive cries of street vendors selling food and other souvenirs. As the book's editors wrote, "one can never say he has really been to Olongapo until he eats what is called, "Frankgggggfurter on A Stick."²⁵⁵ In these examples sound filled the city's main streets. These sounds added a sonic infrastructure on top of the physical architecture of the city's layout. While sailors saw the city's neon signs, the jeepneys, and the corners and eaves of the city's buildings, they also heard live bands and stereos echoing off those buildings and intersecting with the cries of street vendors that shaped the city's culture.

The U.S. Navy's sonic observations of its neighbor did not include any proportional inner self-examination. Subic Bay's administration provided few details about the sound experiences of U.S. sailors or the sonic impact of the Navy in the Philippines. The Navy was unwilling to examine ways sailors added to or disrupted the overseas sound world it was part of. Interviews, cruise books, newspapers, and U.S. Naval documents, however, show that the

U.S. Navy influenced Subic Bay and Olongapo's real and imagined sonic reputations and spaces. Sailors of the *USS Coral Sea* remembered how "the peaceful sound of tropical stillness is occasionally shattered by gunfire from the rifles of *Coral Sea* Marines and sailors."²⁵⁶ In this description, U.S. Marines sonically disrupt the landscape – filling the jungles around the Naval reservation with lead casings, gunpowder, and the reverberant cracks of rifles and larger explosives. The shattering of tropical stillness also implies that there Subic Bay and Olongapo contain natural, quiet sound spaces. The dissonance between the Navy's leadership and individual Naval personnel concerning the Navy's sonic presence and its representation in the Philippines points to embedded political issues concerning the history of occupation, militarization, and colonialism between the U.S. and the Philippines.

Venturing Off Base/City Sounds

Olongapo City seems to have always made an impression on first-time and returning visitors. A crowded, mini-Southeast Asian metropolis of 68,000 people by the mid-1960s, Olongapo's population by Filipinos drawn to the city's growing economy due to its relationship with the Naval Base. U.S. sailors considered Olongapo unique compared to other Pacific port cities that U.S. ships visited like Kaohsiung, Hong Kong, and Yokosuka. Sailors of the *USS Midway* tried to describe what made Olongapo distinct:

Throughout the cruise and this Cruise Book, Midway has visited many places which were hard to describe – Hong Kong's innumerable people, Japan's quiet charm, Hawai'i's tropical splendor. But there is nowhere else exactly like Olongapo. A center where there has been little to hinder the growth of a village centered entirely on the likes of the sailor, Olongapo has been like Topsy, it has just grown. A seemingly

endless chain of neon lights provide the only warmth along what must be the longest single street of sailor-trapping night spots on earth.²⁵⁷

Present in this description are oblique references to the density of nightclubs, bars, and performance halls that lined Olongapo's streets and their neon lights designed to entice sailors to enter. What stood out to the *Midway's* sailors was the crush of people and activity in Olongapo, dedicated to the needs, wants, and desires of the U.S. sailor. These closely packed-together "sailor-trapping night spots" created a chaotic tableau for sailors visiting the city on shore leave. Preconceived notions of race and gender affected U.S. sailor's experiences of Olongapo. The brief reference to "topsy" in the above passage is a reference to character Topsy, the wild black girl in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In displaying her ignorance of Christianity and the Bible, Topsy suggests she didn't know if god made her but, maybe she was "grow'd." As the book goes on, Topsy becomes less erratic and an increasingly sympathetic character, instead of one to laugh at and mock. That the *Midway's* sailors included the "grow'd like Topsy" phrase points to the racialized lens that many American sailors still understood and viewed Olongapo through, as a dark, wild, savage city that grew seemingly out of nothing but muddy tidal flats, a rise from barbarous to civilized.²⁵⁸ The history of racial politics regarding Filipinos and African Americans dates to the American colonial period in the Philippines and continued to shape U.S.-Philippine relations in the 1950s and 1960s, as the Navy sought to diffuse internal racial tensions as the Navy become more racially integrated.²⁵⁹ Neither black nor white, Filipinos complicated the American racial binary. Paul Kramer argues that race defined U.S.-Philippine relations, and that taking over the Philippines forced Americans to construct new ways of thinking about

race. Kramer uses the politics of racial recognition to argue that race and empire defined each other as the U.S. entered a new age of global geopolitics.²⁶⁰ Nerissa Balce writes in counterpoint to Kramer that the American racial understanding of the Philippines was a product of visual abjection, “the process for analyzing conditions for perceiving the American empire through the actual bodies subjected to its violence and its benevolence.”²⁶¹ Balce argues that racial and sexual visual representations of Filipinos during the Philippine-American War helped to create an American-imperial mindset, normalized violence towards and subjugation of Filipinos, and erected the visual boundaries of the American empire. It is impossible to write about the sounds of Olongapo without considering the underlying racial infrastructure of the city and how Americans represented the city’s citizens.

Although the *USS Midway*’s sailor’s felt “there is nowhere else exactly like Olongapo,” U.S. army camp cities and other navy port cities in the United States and overseas shared many characteristics by the 1960s. In Catherine Lutz’s close study of U.S. Army Base Fort Bragg and its adjacent city Fayetteville, North Carolina, she describes the carnival atmosphere of downtown Fayetteville as thousands of soldiers passed through before deploying to Vietnam. She wrote:

As night replaced day, however, hundreds of soldiers’ cars pulled in where the shoppers had just backed out, and men headed for the many bars and clubs of the 400 and 500 block of Hay Street and its intersecting roads. There they found a free-for-all of alcohol, drugs, prostitution, and fisticuffs, as well as camaraderie and play.²⁶²

Lutz describes a familiar scene of prostitution and drinking, so-called recreation activities that echo throughout histories of and testimonies from U.S. sailors regarding Olongapo City in the Philippines. U.S. sailors filled their cruise yearbooks in the 1960s with odes to San Miguel beer, the women they met, and the general chaos and congestion of Olongapo. A passage from the *USS Enterprise's* 1965-1966 cruise, for example, detailed that “for those who like parties – and who doesn’t – nearby Olongapo had one going continuously with lots of music and dancing and pretty girls to enjoy it all with.”²⁶³ Substitute a few names, and these sailors could be describing Fayetteville, NC. Other examples from scholars studying overseas U.S. military bases also demonstrate that the U.S. Navy’s relationship with Olongapo was not unlike the civil-military dynamic of other bases. In Jana K. Lipman’s study of the city of Guantanamo, Cuba, near U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, she argues that the effects of overseas U.S. militarization are similar everywhere, that, “prostitution, economic dependence, and environmental destruction were the norm.”²⁶⁴ The socio-cultural and economic issues that Lipman describes are the same ones that diplomats, politicians, critics, and military personnel debated throughout Subic Bay’s lifespan into its closure in 1991-1992.²⁶⁵

The everyday sonic relationships between U.S. Navy personnel and the citizens of Olongapo City sounded different from the conversations and relationships between senators, diplomats, military officers, and other U.S. and Philippine leaders debating the politics of occupation and sovereignty in the Philippines. The sonic differences between the base and the city also contrasted in terms of volume. When I asked Jim Pope about the sounds he heard in the Philippines, he described a binary of sound and silence that reflected

the physical divisions between town and base. He offered clear memories of Olongapo City as noisy and chaotic. Off-base, Jim recalled “drunken brawls and fights and that kind of stuff... That was going on all the time. Shore patrol wagon honking away and running to some brawl some place... it was always Americans involved.”²⁶⁶ In a 1960 U.S. Navy incident report from the Naval communications command near Subic Bay detailed a similar event, in which “several marines and sailors had been drinking heavily and arguing loudly,” and later attacked by an organized Filipino mob consisting of about forty men.²⁶⁷ In both cases, drunk Americans filled Philippine sovereign space with their loud voices and physical violence, followed by the commotion and the arrival of the Shore Patrol to diffuse the situation.

These two accounts reveal several things. Olongapo’s well-known bar and music scene also featured chronic public noise caused by Americans. Nightclubs were places for live music and loud Americans. Jim described the ubiquitous sirens of U.S. shore patrol vehicles in Olongapo during the evenings. And he described the sounds in the city beyond the live bands and street musicians. Olongapo was loud because of the city’s design and congestion, and it was chaotic because of U.S. service members filling its spaces. Millions of sailors and Marines took liberty at Subic every year throughout the 1960s, and a daily minimum of 5,000 U.S. sailors passed regularly through the gate.²⁶⁸ In 1967, for example, Subic Bay hosted 2,586 ships, an average of 216 ships per month with consistent overlap between different ships in port. The total visiting sailors in any given month swelled Subic’s regular shore population and the population density in Olongapo. When I interviewed U.S. Navy veteran David Ball, he didn’t recall the base’s leadership or his own command expressing concerns about sailor’s being loud. He described how the shore patrol strictly monitored behavior during liberty, but

not sound. Raised voices attracted the shore patrol, but only because yelling usually preceded fighting. Otherwise, loud American voices were keynote sounds in Olongapo.²⁶⁹

Although Olongapo featured U.S. Naval sounds, the sounds of Filipino daily life and culture defined the city's character. The sailors of the *USS Hancock*, who documented their 1960 port of call through Subic and liberty in Olongapo echoed Jim's observations and described a dense acoustic environment filled with many sounds that reflected Filipino culture, and demonstrated how familiar the sounds of daily life in Olongapo were to U.S. sailors:

"Let's go to Olongapo!" The cry resounded in service clubs at dark and at liberty call. For at night Olongapo presents the face of a painted lady of the evening. She is a kaleidoscope of gaily painted jeepneys, neon signs, dingy night clubs, and houses on stilts, a montage of cinnamon skin and big brown eyes, San Miguel, and strange money called pesos. The air is filled with dust, new smells, and excitement. Shouts and cheers echo from the cock pit; raucous laughter and coy giggles from the clubs mix with grunts and cackles from farm-like back yards and the spirited shrieks of seemingly countless children.²⁷⁰

Sailors of the *USS Midway* also described sonically dense and chaotic scenes in Olongapo. During the *Midway's* 1963-1964 cruise, the cruise book editors wrote about:

The differences between day and night in Olongapo was, that during the day, the sun was out. The rest was very much the same...people wandering about streets and the loudest jukeboxes in the world blaring the loudest rock and roll into the streets.²⁷¹

Olongapo sounded congested and overwhelming. Humans, animals, structures, numerous genre cover bands, jukeboxes, and stereo systems together created a complicated sonic tapestry that filled the space and the ears of U.S. sailors and Filipinos. Many of these sounds were of Filipino cultural origin – the carabao, wandering children, fighting cock pits, and the street vendors. These sounds of Filipino culture coexisted with U.S. Naval-produced sounds in Olongapo, both fundamental to the city’s socio-sonic infrastructure. The sounds and overall foreignness of Olongapo and Filipinos intoxicated sailors, who drank in the “new smells,” the “excitement,” and the sonic juxtaposition of nightclubs, animals, and children of the city. Others sounds, however, like the rock and roll music that poured into the city streets reflected the influence of American culture, and the city’s status as a port city that transmitted culture. The experience of Olongapo’s sounds and space led the sailors of the *Hancock* to personify the city as a woman and a prostitute – a “painted lady of the evening” (and during the day). U.S. sailors perceived the city as performing a feminine sexuality for the consumption of American men, an understanding that emerged from the city’s economic dependence on the base, *and* the base’s dependence on Filipino labor and services. The cruise books, meanwhile, do not mention the role and cultural position of Filipino men in Olongapo. Sailors thought of the women of Olongapo as manifestations of the sensory totality of Olongapo – a collection of bright colors, loud sounds, “cinnamon skin and big brown eyes,” neon-lit nightclubs, and ramshackle structures in addition to the sounds of the prostitute’s “coy giggles” constituted this sound world. U.S. sailors considered Olongapo a paragon of what they found compelling about the people and their experiences in the city. The following image of Olongapo City features a U.S. sailor walking down Magsaysay Drive during the day and demonstrates the mass of clubs, bars, and stores sailors encountered. The

sailor is wearing his public uniform, a reminder to him and to Filipinos about his status and place in the city. On the left side of the street is a hotel and bar. On the right side is tailors' shop, musical instrument store, another hotel, and what looks like almost a dozen clubs, while several jeepneys sit idle against the curb and two Filipinos walk toward the sailor. The store, bar, and club signs are large, colorful, and hard to miss. The street and sidewalks are not crowded, but the different businesses are stacked closely next to each other. The image shows a different side of Olongapo, a quiet, uncrowded, open city. Despite the apparent calm in the image, the bright signs are reminders of Olongapo's life as a party city at night. The cruise book editors included this photograph to remind sailors about time spent in Olongapo's many bars and nightclubs and the music and sounds part of that environment, highlights from their cruise stop in the Philippines.



Figure 4-2 Magsaysay Drive, Olongapo City, Philippines, circa 1960s.²⁷²

Olongapo possessed a well-known reputation for fun, filth, and music in the 1960s and that legacy endures to this day. But that description reduces and obscures the range of activities and infrastructural projects led by the U.S. Navy in collaboration with local Philippine leadership that further added to this sound world. Beginning in 1960, expanding Philippine government influence in Olongapo limited the Navy's legal influence to the Naval base, but its cultural, economic, and sonic continued to stretch beyond the base's borders. By 1960, the U.S. Navy made numerous concessions in gestures of goodwill towards the Philippines and returned full jurisdiction over Olongapo back to the Philippines. The base's Public Works Center (PWC), however, formed part of the connective tissue that continued to link and influence on- and off-base life. One of the PWC's flagship programs in the 1960s

was construction procurement and contracting in conjunction with the base's Process Plant Section. The base experienced a construction boom in the 1960s to expand the base's facilities in support of combat operations in Vietnam. When the Navy contracted some of its construction and materials needs off base, they also parted with the accompanying sonic afterlife of heavy construction and material processing. Base newspaper *Subic Bay News* detailed how "heavy boulders blasted by means of explosives from mother rock are hauled in by dump trucks to undergo the crushing process," later transported by trucks through Olongapo to the base.²⁷³

It is not surprising that the U.S. Navy contracted many of its industrial services off base, as military leaders struggled to control the base's public image. Local reporters and citizens knew the plant for "Belching smoke, emitting dust and giving out jarring noise."²⁷⁴ By moving some of the dirty and noisy industrial work off base, the Navy demonstrated its commitment to supporting the local Filipino economy and created a more sonically peaceful work and home life on base for its sailors and military dependents. The base ceased to be affiliated with the stains of black smoke and jarring noises from the plant. Another interpretation is that the Navy dumped unwanted, dirty, and ugly aspects of industrialization off base for the local Filipino population to deal with. Large numbers of Filipinos depended on the formal and illicit economies the base propped up, and the U.S. controlled and dictated aspects of the local economy, another manifestation of an inherited colonial relationship. Like colonial photographers before them, the Navy's leaders at Subic Bay wielded power and fashioned economic and sonic life on- and off-base to their own specifications.

In some instances, however, Naval leaders at Subic Bay wanted to emphasize the sonic impact of the Navy in Olongapo. In a politically calculated 1968 newspaper piece titled “Fleet’s Work and Music Promote Closer Relations,” U.S. Navy journalist JO3 Bob Rainville reported the positive effects of sailor-civilian interactions. U.S. sailors worked with Olongapo City citizens to help build up the Boys Town community center, a space and program for the struggling community’s children. Sailors served as instructors in farming and building, and helped lay foundations for new facilities.²⁷⁵ As they worked, a Navy band from the *USS Coral Sea* “played popular music for the boys and the school children,” and “performed before students at the National High School and Bajac-Bajac Elementary School in Olongapo City.”²⁷⁶ In a performance reversal, the U.S. Navy band played for Filipinos instead of a Filipino band performing for U.S. sailors.

The performance, however, was a political device demonstrate to the local Filipino community the positive aspects of a continued friendly relationship with the Navy. This was the politics of occupation mediated through music, through the sonic. To show respect and goodwill towards their Filipino hosts, sailors at Subic Bay participated in community outreach events and disaster relief efforts. These actions, however, could also disguise the shape of naval and sonic occupation; attempts at geopolitical sleight-of-hand, to misdirect and mask American dominance at Subic Bay and in the Southwest Pacific. Sound and music were tools used to elicit positive emotional responses instead of critical-political ones from Filipino communities abutting the naval base. This 1968 event concluded with the ceremonial presentation of a school bell, offered by LCdr. John A. Baxter – chaplain on the *USS Camden* – to Castillejos Mayor Rodrigo Trimorand and to the elementary school’s

principal Gerardo Beltran.²⁷⁷ This was a public display of intercultural exchange that happened around a musical and sonic symbol. Alan Corbin wrote that bells wield emotional power and transmit “auditory messages” of power, ownership, control, time, and regulation.²⁷⁸ That the Navy also chose a chaplain to conduct the presentation might also have been an appeal to the religiosity of the Philippines, a nation of millions of Catholics with their own set of unique expressions of Catholicism. The Navy hoped the 1968 bell presentation and the bell itself would symbolize the selfless and generous sailors who represented the Navy and the United States. The bell was also a reminder of the existing power relations between the U.S. and the Philippines, and between the naval base and the city. Although intended as a gesture of goodwill between two allied nations, the bell could have just as easily conveyed the Navy’s dominance over the local economy and culture, a sonic reminder of occupation, and an extension of the base’s sonic presence. The Navy occupied a cordoned-off stretch of coastal Philippine land, but also made its presence felt further inland away from the base, a physically, sonically, and culturally occupying force.



Figure 4-3 LCdr. John A. Baxter bestows a school bell to Castillejos Mayor Rodrigo Trimor for Sta. Maria Elementary School, 1968.²⁷⁹

U.S. sailors had many reasons for going to Olongapo. They went for liberty rest, shopping, sightseeing, and community service. Many sailors also lived in Olongapo. Due to limited on base housing, not all sailors and families lived on base. There was not enough family housing or even unaccompanied sailor or marine housing for everyone on base as Subic's responsibilities and support role in the Vietnam War expanded. Many families lived off base and sailors commuted to their jobs at the base. Living off base brought the sounds of American domestic life into direct contact with Philippine domestic life. While off base living provided a degree of freedom and excitement, it was also challenging and affected U.S.-Philippine relations.

J. Martin Daughtry writes about how during war "sound becomes indistinguishable from violence itself," and expanding the range of Daughtry's *belliphonic* brings into focus how militarization – including wartime fighting – connects to sound, and can "deepen the silence about violence, in order to hide its origins."²⁸⁰ In Olongapo, the sounds and noises attached to these kinds of dangers were signs of impending problems. Motorcycle and aircraft engines, loud American voices, and arguments and accidents between Filipinos and Americans affected Olongapo's sound spaces and how all groups of people living there interpreted and reacted to the U.S. Navy. Subic Bay's leaders and public affairs team worried about negative press and rising Philippine nationalism, and the sound and pain of events like David's accident reflected poorly of the base. David's Navy-sponsored lawyer who smoothed things over was one of many legal officers who handled the legal, public, and political fallout of American crimes and accidents in the Philippines. As early as 1964, Navy legal officers fretted about the rate of American crime and the Navy's ability to control

sailors and appease Philippine protests. At a 1964 conference, Navy Captain Hogan worried about criminal jurisdiction issues in the Philippines and inquired of his Philippine-based counterpart whether the Navy could place legal observers at trials. Captain Wiviott explained that, “we try to assign military lawyers as observers in each case, but we find that almost impossible to do because of the large incidence of trials.”²⁸¹ Accidents like David’s then, were common, not exceptions. More serious crimes like rape, murder, fraud, theft, and smuggling were also prevalent.²⁸² Although there was not a conventional war in Olongapo or at Subic Bay, the U.S. Navy, the Philippine Government, and local Filipino activist groups fought over sound, sovereignty, and jurisdiction, and events where sound, violence, and precarity fused together in Olongapo’s city streets.

There were many changes to Olongapo’s sonic, cultural, and social norms due of the city’s proximity to the base. Filipino activist and writer Ed Garcia wrote about how overseas U.S. military bases affect their local communities and added the framework of morality to the discussion. He wrote that, “the negative social behavior and values arising from the activities which sprout around the base areas leave a profound moral impact on the local population, especially the youth.”²⁸³ What Garcia described in the Philippines during the late 1980s matches what David remembered in the 1960s and 1970s. In this example, a young Filipino boy throws himself willingly in front of a motorcycle knowing that he will endure pain but will also be paid. A community where economic life is one of moral degradation and speaks to the desperation and poverty affecting many Filipinos in Olongapo – those not fortunate enough to work on base or in an industry benefitting from the patronage of U.S. sailors. In 1961, Navy leaders at Subic Bay understood that, “Olongapo has no major

industry; it has, however, small scale industries such as lumber, poultry and swine raising.”²⁸⁴

A 1962 memo to the U.S. Embassy in Manila from the office of the commander of all U.S. Naval Forces in the Philippines offered a similar assessment: “Olongapo is basically a nightclub town with few restaurants, fewer curio shops, and no industry.”²⁸⁵ The Navy did not include local industries shaped by sound like prostitution, live music, cock fighting, and deliberate injury in their assessment of Olongapo’s economy. These micro-economies that sounds helped to facilitate – the approaching motorcycle engine or a couple’s-dance song – are some of the unheard effects of overseas militarization on local communities.

Nightlife and Worklife

For both Americans and Filipinos traversing Olongapo City, music served as one of the primary means of interaction and communication. Filipino cover bands internalized popular U.S. hits of the day to later perform for sailors on liberty. U.S. sailors remembered the many live bands that played Olongapo’s clubs fondly, immortalized them in cruise books, newspapers, and U.S. Naval correspondence and administrative files. The *USS Coral Sea’s* 1967-1968 cruise book made special mention of the bands of Olongapo: “the clubs have talented bands that play the best known and most recent hit tunes of the states. There is no doubt to some sailors that their combos would rival some of our own.”²⁸⁶ In this passage, U.S. sailors complimented Filipino bands with what they considered high praise: comparison to American bands. Rather than evaluating the music and the performers on their own merits, *Coral Sea’s* cruise book editors assigned value to what they heard by linking those sounds to American bands they considered to best or superior. To meet U.S. sailors’ standards, Filipino bands had to perform in a style and manner sailors knew. This was an

inevitable consequence of a repertoire based on imitation and rendition, during which listeners compare to the original.

The sonic and quality standards for Filipino bands, however, were also a legacy of U.S. colonialism in the Philippines. During the American colonial occupation of the Philippines (1898-1946), control over labor and representations of Filipinos was a vital to how American citizens understood their relationships to Filipinos and to the Philippines as a nation-state. Vicente Rafael described how during the American colonial period in the Philippines, the camera functioned as a visual transducer. A transducer is a device or force that takes quantities of energy or a signal, and converts those elements into a new or different energy form or signal.²⁸⁷ For Rafael, photographs transduced the physical, fleshly bodies of Filipinos for American public, “in order to convert the colonized into objects of foreign interests...”²⁸⁸ He writes that photography when used in this manner took on a “predatory and cannibalistic quality.”²⁸⁹ Benito Vergara also wrote of how the Philippines was a political possession, “as it was a visual possession as well, to be gazed at in the comfort of the American home.”²⁹⁰ Through material devices – the camera and the photograph – Filipinos turned into colonial subjects to be “gazed at” from afar. Phonographic transduction matched audibly the consumption and gobbling up of the foreign Filipino through tourist and ethnological photography; the phonograph transmogrified Filipino voices and music and into physical records, ready for easy distribution and comfy consumption by curious American listeners.

By the 1960s, with the dissolution of American colonial governance in the Philippines, musical recordings and live bands continued to create conditions that

transduced Filipino sounds into material products or emotional experiences for American military personnel stationed or taking leave at Subic Bay. Nightclubs, bars, and stages served as conduits for processes of transduction to occur. Philippine nationals transformed temporarily back into colonial subjects through the patron-performer dynamic in these sound spaces. During their performances, Filipino musicians transformed from silent, unintelligible, or unfamiliar bodies into American-style performers. By playing music in a manner familiar and desired by American sailors and marines, Filipino musicians became legible performers and laborers. This transduction turned Filipino musicians into sonic objects for consumption, which alongside photography and phonography shaped American understandings of their curious “little brown brothers.” Through this process of transduction and within such sonic contexts, Filipino musicians became what Homi Bhabha described as “a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite,” a “partial presence,” “incomplete and virtual.”²⁹¹ This was the subjectivity sailors from the *USS Coral Sea* placed onto Filipino bands in 1967. As good as some of the bands clearly were, they could never measure up to the quality of an American band – they were “almost the same, but not quite.” Bhabha, however, described a degree of *ambivalence* attached to mimicry and that ambivalence could infuse mimetic acts with competing functions, of representation and disavowal. The disavowal of power dynamics can be an effective means of colonial-sonic disruption, and in this instance of sonic politics, is like what Tom Rice described as a “culture of resistance to a dominant soundscape.”²⁹²

Fritz Schenker wrote about the rise of the “professional Filipino jazz musician,” in the years following the First World War. He describes how this mobile labor class worked

entertainment circuits throughout Asia and emerged due to a flagging Philippine economy and from the demand for popular jazz dance music, disseminated transnationally through sheet music and records.²⁹³ Schenker also argues that jazz labor was “a distinctly imperial form of work,” “structured both within an economy of formal colonialism... and as part of the global ambitions of the U.S. commercial music industries.”²⁹⁴ Like Schenker, Stephanie Ng studied Filipino musicians traveling Asia’s port city hotel performance circuit.²⁹⁵ In the background of Schenker and Ng’s studies is the presence of U.S. military bases and personnel that also facilitated the expansion and popularity of jazz and jazz labor in the Philippines and into Asia. Pinoy Jazz expert Richie Quirino wrote about the “influx of entertainment-hungry GI’s” to the Philippines at the conclusion of World War II, who brought with them “V” or Victory Discs and helped to reinvigorate Manila’s big band jazz industry.²⁹⁶ Bassist Angel Pena also recounted that as nightclubs reopened in Manila in 1945, Filipino bandleaders partnered with American GI’s to open their own jazz clubs, which provided additional performance opportunities and spaces.²⁹⁷ These jazz musicians were progenitors of successful overseas Philippine labor, what Robyn Rodriguez termed the modern Philippine “labor-brokerage state,” an economic strategy where the Philippine state trades in human labor, profiting through remittances.²⁹⁸

American generated their assumptions about organic Philippine musicality by the presence of the many Filipino jazz musicians and bands in and around U.S. Military bases. The myth of the mimetic Filipino jazz musician carried through into official U.S. diplomatic and political documents relating to the Philippines. The 1969 *Area Handbook for the Philippines*, researched and written through the Foreign Area Studies program at the American

University, refers to the musical abilities of Filipinos, and thus shaped congressional and foreign service opinions of the Philippines. The handbook describes with confidence that, “A naturally musical people, the Filipinos accepted with delight new musical instruments, such as the Spanish guitar, European scales and harmonies, the courtly dances and, later, Western popular music and dance.”²⁹⁹ The development of imperial Philippine jazz labor through military bases proved a Janus-faced process for musicians, as bases were at once essential economic centers as well as spaces for enacting imperial dynamics. Performing familiar jazz charts for American GIs meant of course, mirroring the sounds heard on popular jazz records. While such big band performances were popular before and after World War II, big band jazz remained popular in the Philippines into the 1960s (as it did in the United States), and there are numerous examples that demonstrate the continued reliance on American jazz sounds by Filipino musicians, in order to placate entertainment demands of American GIs.

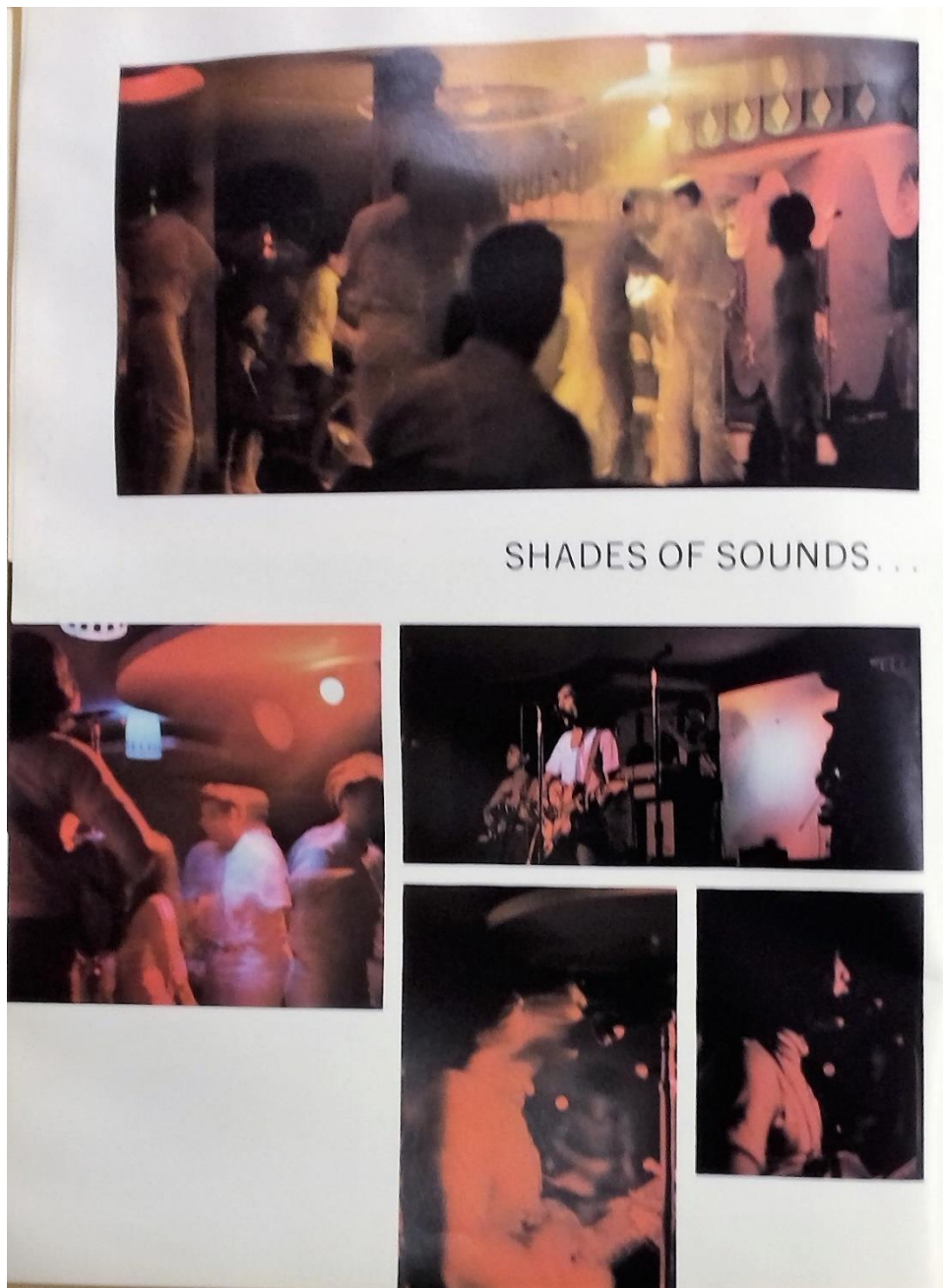


Figure 4-4 Photographs and memories of sound in Olongapo. A page from a USS Ranger cruise book, 1969.³⁰⁰

The above image is a page the *USS Ranger's* 1969 cruise book. The collection of photographs on the page are meant to convey the “shades of sound” *Ranger* sailors experienced in Olongapo. The photos are nightclub-red and blurry, although it is not clear if

they were mistakenly or deliberately blurred. The photographs show U.S. sailors and Filipino musicians in a bar or club listening and performing music. That the editors dedicated an entire page of the yearbook to memories and impressions of sound, shows how important sound was sailors' experiences of Olongapo City. Sound was one way that sailors remembered and experienced the city. Other experiences or impressions receiving full page spreads in cruise books included trips to Manila, Baguio City, the Philippine countryside. These were organized, multi-day trips that immersed sailors in the sights, sounds, and smells of the Philippines. Yet, for sailors, nightclub outings and live music in Olongapo were just as exciting and meaningful as once-in-a-lifetime trips and cultural immersion in the Philippines. The bands must have sounded good for the editors to include a dedicated page and several photographs of musicians performing. I include this page to show that sailors thought actively about sound, especially the sounds of Olongapo City. While administrative Navy documents acknowledged that sailors visited nightclubs, sailors and cruise book editors heard the sounds in those nightclubs and tried to preserve their sonic memories in print and in images.

Musicians performed in Olongapo to attract sailors into the many bars and nightclubs lining Magsaysay Drive beyond the gates of the base. Music filled the background of dances, flirtations, and sexual interactions between Filipinas and American sailors. Prostitution and music shared similar spaces in Olongapo. Sailors of the *USS Ranger* sensed the connection and provided their own interpretation of Bob Dylan's 1965 "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues" to commemorate their time in the Philippines during their 1968-1969

WESTPAC cruise. They included a verse from their version, the “Talkin’ San Miguel Bottle Disaster Blues:”

Don’t put on any airs when you’re down
on Rue Morgue Avenue.
They got some hungry women there
that’ll really make a mess out outta you.
Sweet Melinda, the peasants call her the
goddess of gloom.
She speaks good English and she invites
you up to her room.
And you’re so kind and careful not to go
to her too soon,
But she takes all your pesos and leaves
you howling at the moon.³⁰¹

The sailors saw and heard a connection between the dystopian and chaotic Juarez, Mexico of Dylan’s song and their liberty experiences in port in Olongapo. Both Juarez and Olongapo were border towns on the line of U.S. sovereign territory, both known for prostitution, drugs, alcohol, poverty, and corruption. A sailor during the *USS Ranger’s* 1966-1967 cruise also remarked that Olongapo City “sorta reminds me of Tiajuana,” another Mexican border town known for sloppy American behavior and a bevy of illicit delights.³⁰² That U.S. sailors heard Olongapo in Dylan’s song reveals the character of the U.S. Navy’s relationship with the city. By 1968, Olongapo was no longer under U.S. Naval control and considered a playground for sailors on liberty. The “Talking San Miguel Disaster Blues” describes through music the average U.S. sailors’ perspective of Olongapo and of Filipinas living there. In this

instance, women aren't even given the benefit of being assumed a Madonna: they are assumed to be whores, cunning and manipulative and available to Americans. The relationships between American sailors and Filipinas continue to dominate narratives about Subic Bay and about the U.S. military in the Philippines. American attitudes towards the women of Olongapo varied, but cruise books, U.S. Naval correspondence, and administrative files held a negative view of towards the hostesses of the city. U.S. sailors of the *USS Midway* felt a mixture of pity, disdain, and desire during their encounters with Filipinas in Olongapo during their 1963-1964 cruise. A passage in that year's cruise book details:

Hordes of pathetic, dark-eyed bar girls line the streets of Olongapo day and night in their attempts to "make a living." Some hustle drinks, some hit the "big time" and become entertainers in the endless string of "nightclubs" which run full blast from liberty call till curfew. It must be said of Olongapo, that it is not quite like any other place the Midway goes.³⁰³

Allusions to sex and pleasure abound in this passage and the frequent use of quotation marks signal that U.S. sailors understood that "nightclub" meant brothel and "big time entertainers" meant prostitutes. Cynthia Enloe writes about how a military base and the nearby local community is "a complicated micro-world dependent on diverse women," and that "even bases deliberately located far from local towns send out sociocultural ripples, shaping local people's gendered understandings of the nation, modernity, security, and citizenship."³⁰⁴ It is clear from many of the examples in this chapter that Naval Base, Subic Bay profoundly impacted gendered relationships between American sailors and local

Filipinas. There were clear distinctions related to gendered labor on base and off base, with women of many nationalities filling roles in service to American men.

U.S. sailors arriving at Subic Bay for the first time for repairs or liberty did not know what to expect of the Philippines, Subic Bay, and Olongapo would be like. They didn't know what they would see, hear, or smell. During a 1962 Far East Cruise, sailors of the *USS Midway* arrived in "the unusual town of Olongapo." The editors described how "No one had anticipated too good a time, but the lover of rock and roll, the lover of sun and the lover of sheer recreation were pleasantly surprised. The loud rock and roll of Olongapo beat any heard elsewhere."³⁰⁵ Filipino rock bands figure prominently into many U.S. Navy cruise books, although most books did not include specific band names, songs heard, or performance locations. Music in Olongapo created spaces and moments where Americans and Filipinos came together and enacted the culture of geo-politics while also shaping and structure to socio-economic life of Olongapo City. The photograph below included in the *USS Canberra's* 1969 cruise book shows three musicians performing, two prominently in the foreground. There is perhaps an unseen drummer. The haircuts, flower petal stickers on the guitar, and the colorful guitar strap suggest these musicians performed in a style indebted to the psychedelic rock of the era. The cruise book editors did not include the names of these musicians or whether they were local. This group must have been exceptional, though, because the editors gave them a two-page spread in the cruise book with full-page photographs, instead of the usual montage. Seeing the guitars and the microphone reminded sailors that these musicians had amplification befitting a rock performance. The pictured musicians represent Olongapo's music scene, and the way the cruise book editors included

them in the cruise book reveals that music was important to sailors and how they experienced and remembered Olongapo sonically.

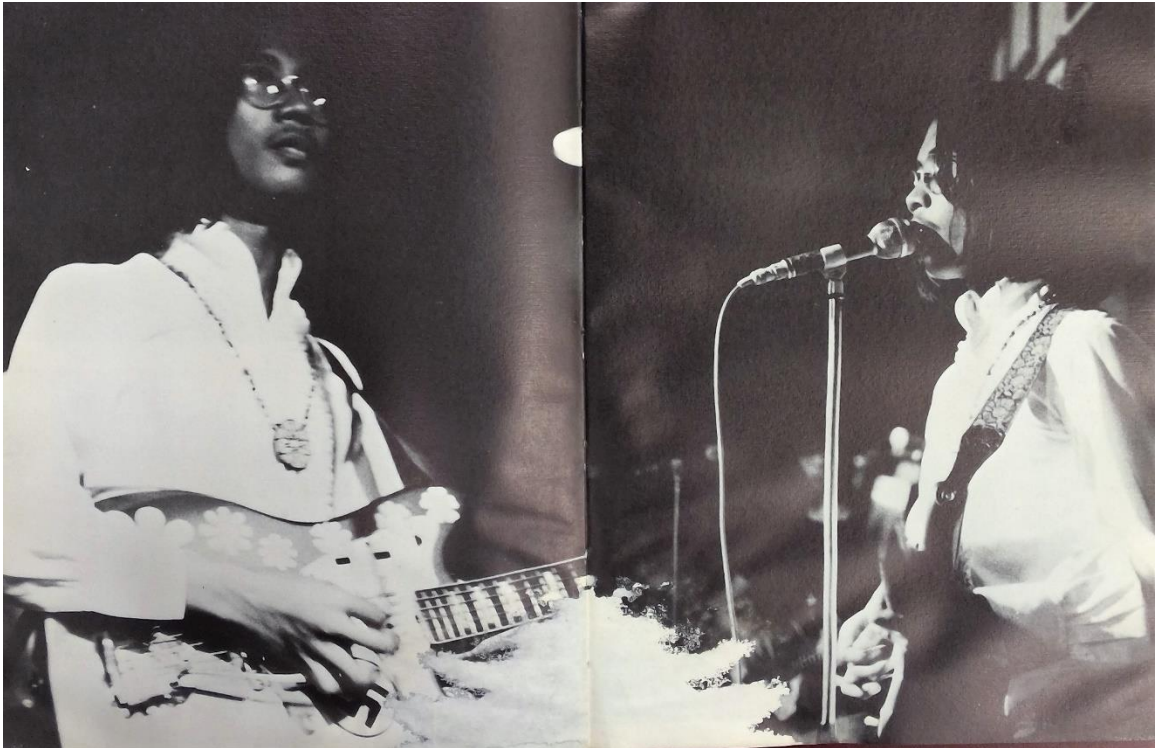


Figure 4-5: *Unnamed Filipino musical duo from the USS Canberra's 1969 cruise book.*³⁰⁶

It is troubling that the Filipinos included in cruise books go unnamed. Although there are many silent figures in Subic Bay's historical record, Filipinos are most commonly without identification. While administrative records from Subic Bay tended to focus on larger geopolitical issues of the 1960s, Naval cruise books were texts that featured Filipino musicians, entertainers, workers, and everyday people who populated Olongapo. Images of live Filipino bands performing for sailors on shore leave off base in Olongapo like the above photograph filled Navy cruise books from the 1960s. Despite the obvious impact these bands made on sailors, cruise book editors did not always name or acknowledge the bands,

singers, musicians, or performers. Cruise books highlighted the impact of their sounds and acts, but they were not recognized as individuals. These performers were another feature of the city and the tropical scenery, background figures fulfilling the expectations and recreation needs of U.S. Naval personnel. Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier writes that, “silence is also used in political language to imply an active politics of domination and nonparticipation,” which pertains to the silencing of Filipino sounds in U.S. Naval cruise books.³⁰⁷ Neglecting or silencing Filipino sounds and voices denied them subjectivity and signaled that U.S. historical narratives were the dominant, acceptable ones. Silencing suggests that Filipinos were not protagonists but peripheral actors, at the edges of the Navy and Subic Bay

An example of this is from the 1966 *USS Enterprise* cruise book, which included a series of photographs that featured an all-Filipina rock group – the Paulettes – in a performance on board the *Enterprise* during its stop at Subic Bay. The background of the photograph is filled with sailors attending the concert next to cruise missiles, metal pipes, and hull of the ship. Despite the Paulettes putting on “a most entertaining show for the Big E crew while the ship was in Subic Bay,” the cruise book’s editors did not name any of the four musicians or mention any of their songs. There is one brief caption that identifies the group as the Paulettes and it is missed easily.³⁰⁸ This is striking because the Paulettes later achieved a degree of international success and notoriety in the late 1960s and 1970s and embarked on a global tour with performances in many countries including the United States (Las Vegas). They were a rock band in the hull of a ship with an audience of sound-starved American sailors. These musicians produced a great deal of sound while sailors listened actively – they were not ignored during their performance. Cruise book editors did not

consider their names important and their sounds not significant beyond their performances. There are several levels of historical silencing occurring in this short section of the cruise book. There is the inevitable silencing of music as well as the silencing of Filipinas. The politics of colonial and archival power dynamics are evident here, too. It is difficult to interpret the lack of names as anything other than an act of neocolonial illegibility, a moment when a history of colonial expectations and indifference manifested in the physical enclosure of U.S. military sea power.



Figure 4-6: “The Paulettes” performing on board the USS Enterprise, Subic Bay, 1966.³⁰⁹

Although many nightclubs and bars in Olongapo facilitated the prostitution industry and economy, the live and recorded music present in these spaces also created scenarios for less exploitative or asymmetrical physical contact between Americans and Filipinas. Many U.S. Navy cruise books from the 1960s included photographs of sailors dancing with Filipinas as equals. Both Americans and Filipinas writhe and twist their bodies together to melodies only they can hear, reduced to silence and lost to history. The photographs,

however, do not indicate what music the dancers heard. In the example below, the dancers twist, likely hearing a popular rock or pop hit from the mid-1960s. The photograph depicts a complicated display of intersecting musical and cultural issues between the dancers, but also challenges the stock narrative of relationships in Olongapo. Although the expected background is a dingy bar or nightclub, this couple instead dance outside during the day. They look at each other, mirroring the other's movements as equals, as a fellow sailor gawks with his mouth agape holding what looks like a beer. For that sailor, it appears the Filipina is an object of tropical desire and conquest, her body and movements his to devour to the music playing in the background. The sailor dancing is concentrating and smiling as he watches his partner dance with him. He is focused and excited. It is not clear whether the woman is smiling, but she appears focused. Without a description, it is impossible to know more about this relationship. They might be married, though it is impossible to tell whether they wear wedding bands. She might be a girlfriend. She might also be a bar hostess or a prostitute. He might have paid her for her time, or they could be out on a date. Whatever their relationship was, in this moment, they appear on equal terms dancing. Despite the geopolitical inequalities and history of racial violence and empire between sailors and Filipinas, these two dancers were part of a sonic moment that put them in equal physical positions. Due to the Navy and individual sailor's lack of interest in representing honestly the women they met in the Philippines, it is not clear how many of these women felt about their relationships with the Navy and sailors. The Navy's records give no indications whether they chose to be silent or unnamed in the historical record. The cruise books rarely identify any of the women by name or the photograph's background locations. They are silent historical actors from the perspective of the U.S. Navy. Cruise book editors and writers

made special effort to document every U.S. sailor and marine by name, rank, and other biographical information, but rarely gave Filipinos working in proximity that same attention to personal detail.



Figure 4-7: U.S. Sailor and Filipina Dancing, Olongapo, c. 1966-1967.³¹⁰

Conclusion: Tropics in the Light of Day

Although the enduring U.S. impressions of Olongapo City consisted of prostitution, live music, congestion, and night clubs, some U.S. sailors and civilians knew the city was more than those superficial impressions. Sailors of the *USS Hancock* found that the twinkling lights and the strains of music during the nights gave way to a contrasting pace of life during the day. The Hancock's cruise book editors reflected that:

Yet Olongapo presents a very different face at dawn. The dusty streets are still there, filled with jeepneys and lined with clubs which seem to have faded and lost their gaiety in the new light. Now the center of activity is the open market place in the center of town. Strange fruits called lanzones, papayas, and pinnes vie with vegetables, clothing, and household wares for the attention of the passing customer. Everywhere underfoot are the children, many clad only in an undershirt, with their happy greeting, “Hi Joe! Hi Joe! Hi Joe!” repeated, broken record fashion, until acknowledged. The people are genuinely friendly, ready to like you and eager to be liked.³¹¹

This passage – like others discussed in this chapter – provides a rich description of Olongapo during the 1960s. It also demonstrates how distant Filipino culture was from everyday American life despite decades of Filipino immigration, a long-term U.S. military presence, and an earlier generation of American colonial governance. Sound and American perceptions of “the tropics” mediated the relationship between Naval Base, Subic Bay and Olongapo City. The tropics of the world were thought to be mini paradises, filled with all things exotic and luxuriant. Hawai’i and the Philippines were the two most prominent tropical paradises in the American imagination. Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez argues that constructed paradises are artificial, gendered, and racialized, and the Pacific territories “were transformed into new exotic frontier destinations” in the post-WWII American cultural consciousness.³¹² Gonzalez’s research also reminds readers there are many ways to interpret the presence and history of U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay in the Philippines. In her study on Vieques, Puerto Rico, also a site of a U.S. Naval base, Katherine T. McCaffrey argues that

the geopolitical consequences of overseas U.S. bases vary widely, “not only between the United States and foreign states but between local communities and national politicians.”³¹³ McCaffrey’s analysis of the situation in Puerto Rico is historically parallel to the Philippines and is an example of what Julian Go calls the “intra-imperial,” the transnational circuits and movement across U.S. colonial possessions.³¹⁴

Although the Philippines is as a unified nation-state, its archipelagic geography creates fissures between the demands of the national state and local provinces, between national politicians and local ones, between elites and non-elites. Gary Hawes noted that in the immediate post-World War II years political and economic power “landholding, agricultural elites” held power, but that by the 1960s their influence waned against what he called “economic nationalism,” a mark of growing Philippine nationalism.³¹⁵ The lingering influence of the *ilustrado* class and other land-owning, educated, or elite Filipino families, however, remained a potent political force in national Philippine politics and obfuscated challenges and concerns of local and poorer communities throughout the Philippines. The *ilustrados* inherited a culture of collaboration with the United States and sometimes found themselves at the junction between nationalism and collaboration. As historian Michael Cullinane demonstrates, not all *ilustrados* were wealthy Filipinos and not all educated Filipinos were *ilustrados*. The hierarchy of the *ilustrado* class was complex, with provincial, urban, and municipal elites vying for power.³¹⁶ The conversations about the U.S. military presence happening around Subic Bay and Olongapo were similarly complex, with the politically dominant Gordon family taking a firm stance in favor of positive U.S.-Philippine relations. Many Filipino base workers and enlisted Filipino sailors in the U.S. Navy were also

vocal supporters of the Navy – those groups who benefitted from their contact and interaction with the Naval base. Cynthia Enloe argued that “most bases have managed to slip into the daily lives of the nearby community. A military base, even one controlled by soldiers of another country, can become politically invisible.”³¹⁷ Enloe’s comments reflect the perspectives of many Americans and Filipinos who found themselves in Subic Bay and Olongapo. And from the U.S. Navy’s position, the political stakes and future of the Naval base depended on diplomatic efforts, and the Navy labored to maintain good relations with the citizens and leadership of Olongapo City.

The interanimation of the Philippine tropics is common in U.S. Naval cruise books. A passage from the *USS Ranger’s* 1965-1966 WESTPAC tour presents a tropical romanticism of the Philippines: “these sun-drenched islands of bamboo, water buffalo, palm trees, and sandy beaches are surrounded by the warmest tropical waters which enable visitors to enjoy their summer fun year around...multi-colored birds and exotic plant life combined with beautiful coral-lined beaches and teeming jungle make this truly a tropical paradise.”³¹⁸ This passage depicts a passive Philippine paradise, full of exotic flora and fauna, a place to luxuriate in tropical waters – a fantasy of perpetual summer. This sensory impression of the Philippines, however, leaves out that the Navy stationed sailors there to work, not to relax. Such memories betray the reality of life at Subic Bay – the imagination supersedes a more tame or disfigured truth. Yet, in some instances, sailors considered Olongapo and the Philippines as less-than-desirable locations. During the *USS Ticonderoga’s* liberty call at Subic Bay and Olongapo in 1960, the sailors found Olongapo uninteresting: “the grubby little town of Olongapo, located outside of Subic Bay Naval Station, offered lean liberties. After a

few experimental trips into the dusty, peso-minded community, the majority of the men settled down with resignation to the base facilities.”³¹⁹ This experience with Olongapo is one of the few I read where American sailors waived off-base liberty privileges. So many other accounts and narratives depict sailors almost drooling with anticipation of anticipated fun in Olongapo – the sexual conquests, alcoholic abandon, and curious sights, sounds, and smells of a foreign culture different from what they left behind in the United States. And in this instance too, sailors focused on the worst of their experiences in the Philippines without the good. This imbalance of the imagination and lived reality defined the history of Americans in Subic Bay and Olongapo.

The American sailors’ sonic experience of Olongapo and interactions with Filipino culture and individuals during this era is a variant of David Novak’s definition of *feedback*, or “interactive sociocultural and economic relationships” characterized by “a practice of musical performance and listening and a condition of subjectivity.”³²⁰ Novak argues that different feedbacks are “cultural patterns of transmission,” products of the circulation of culture and the culture of circulation itself, resulting in the sonic residue of a globalized capitalist system.³²¹ The sonic exchanges and reciprocal listening between Americans and Filipinos in Olongapo formed the resulting feedback of the colonial and post-war U.S.-Philippine relationship, similar to how Novak views Japan’s noise music scene as a product of post-war U.S.-Japan relations. In the 1956 “Plan for the Community of Olongapo,” completed for the Navy by Harland Bartholomew & Associates, the report’s writers suggested that the underlying socio-cultural, architectural, economic, and industrial problems of the city lay with the Navy’s previous stewardship of the area.

The report details how post-war Olongapo “took on the aspects of a boom town or gold rush settlement.” To satisfy the base’s industrial growth and need for local workers, the Navy chose the “immediately adjacent marshy or swamp areas” for “motley clusters of huts and shacks constructed out of any material at hand.”³²² The report’s authors then stated bluntly, that they attributed the “causes of the defects” in Olongapo City to a “lack of foresight,” a “complete lack of planning,” and “lack of funds for installations of essential public improvements.”³²³ Naval leaders at Subic Bay and in Washington, D.C. bore responsibility for Olongapo City’s problems. Desperate for local labor, the Navy built a town on a tidal flat prone to flooding complete with substandard housing units and limited infrastructure. As the city expanded and the population grew during the 1960s, the Navy returned control of Olongapo back to the Philippine Government, finding the city more of a problem than an asset, despite relying on Philippine nationals as base workers. The Navy worried that direct, continued support for Olongapo would “only tend to make [the] community [a] perpetual parasite upon the Naval base.”³²⁴ The wording from this confidential message suggests that Navy leaders thought of Olongapo and Filipinos as a drain on the Navy’s and the base’s resources. This message indicates Navy leaders imagined a hierarchy between Americans and Filipinos, and that the U.S. and the Philippines were not equal and allied nations. Subic Bay’s leaders tried to absolve themselves of their responsibility to the large city built for and overseen by the Navy for decades.

The Navy’s indifference towards Filipinos living and working in Olongapo turned it into a depressed, poverty-stricken, nightclub-city. The veneer of loud bands, exotic women, and friendly locals attributed to Olongapo betrays a history of neglect and exploitation.

Despite individual moments of honest intercultural interaction and affection, the Navy base's relationship with the city of Olongapo was fundamentally unequal. This is evident in how sailors and local civilians listened to and interpreted the sounds of the city and the base. The many reports and cruise book excerpts I included in this chapter show that Filipino voices, music, and cultural acoustics were not the exclusive or defining sonic forces in Olongapo. U.S. sailors subjected the city to drunk sailors arguing loudly into the night, while its nightclubs featured Filipino bands performing popular American songs for the sailors. Although some sailors heard Olongapo – and aspects of Filipino culture – with openness and grace, invasive U.S. acoustics structured Olongapo's underlying sonic palette. The impact of the Navy's self-noise was perhaps most pronounced in the context of Olongapo City compared to the infrastructural and domestic domains on the base. In Olongapo City, U.S. sailors found the sounds of their self-noise often reflected at them in the form of broken English and cover bands. The relationship between the U.S. Navy and Olongapo City also shows that the Navy's self-noise overseas in the Philippines was not limited to the boundaries of the base. U.S. sailors traveled between the base and the city as individual units of self-noise.

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Cultural and sonic tensions between naval bases and local towns have always been feature of maritime enclaves, army forts, air stations, and in modern port and base cities. The presence of a military force places certain expectations on neighboring communities along with unique challenges. The communities at once benefitted economically from military and troop spending, but also contend with illicit activities, exploitation, and pollution. These

challenges also exist around contemporary domestic U.S. military installations, but without the cultural distance and misunderstanding of the United States and U.S. military culture. I live on a military base, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton. It borders the communities of Oceanside, San Clemente, and Fallbrook, CA. I live by the Oceanside boundary and I consider myself a member of that community even though I live on base. I have an Oceanside address and I do errands around town. I use the public library, go out to dinner, get my oil changed, and dry-clean my clothes in downtown Oceanside. Despite all the activities I do there, I still feel a distance from the larger community because I live on base.

Endnotes

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²⁴⁹ Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, *Senses of Place* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996), 55.

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²⁵¹ Anon., *USS Kitty Hawk, 1966-1967, Westpac Cruise*, page numbers not listed. Department of the Navy Library.

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- ²⁵⁶ Anon., *Cruise of United States Ship Coral Sea (CVA-43), April 3, 1963 – November 25, 1963*, 125. Department of the Navy Library.
- ²⁵⁷ “Subic Bay and Okinawa,” *USS Midway Far East Cruisebook*, 1962, 131. Department of the Navy Library.
- ²⁵⁸ To the best of my knowledge, “grow’d like topsy” was a semi-common phrase in the United States during the twentieth century. Although Beecher Stowe wrote Topsy to be a sympathetic figure, it seems that she is best remembered as a caricature of African American culture in the 19th century, a character to be laughed at, mocked, and from which to draw racialized generalizations of African Americans.
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- ²⁶⁰ Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 14-17.
- ²⁶¹ Nerissa S. Balce, *Body Parts of Empire: Visual Abjection, Filipino Images, and the American Archive* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 8.
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- ²⁷⁰ LtJG R.C. Allen, ed. *1960 Hannah, USS Hancock CV A-19, Carrier Air Group 11, 1960 Westpac Cruise* (Tokyo: Daito Art Printing, Co.), 70.
- ²⁷¹ *USS Midway, WESTPAC Cruise, 1963-1964*. “Philippines” section, no page number listed. Department of the Navy Library.
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³²⁰ David Novak, *Japanoise: Music at the Edge of Circulation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 149, 17.

³²¹ Novak, 150.

³²² “A Plan for the Community of Olongapo,” 5, 1956, NRHS 313-60-0053, Box #7, Philippine Flag Secretary’s Office, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Philippines; Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1951-1957, RG 313; NARA-San Bruno.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 27.

³²⁴ Confidential U.S. Naval Message, Copy of Embassy Note No. 608, January 1960, Box 3/11, NRHS 313-08-006, RG 313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Philippines, General Correspondence and Reports, 1945-1959, NARA-San Bruno.

Chapter V: Sound, Culture, and Militarization

After the 1960s

As the 1960s ended, U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay was transformed from a peripheral coaling station destroyed during World War II into the U.S. Navy's busiest logistic, repair, and supply installation in the Pacific. The sounds of change that echoed through the base and Olongapo City set the tone for the following decades of conflict and collaboration between the United States and the Philippines. The real and imagined Subic Bay of the 1970s and 1980s that made headlines and that service members and civilians remember was built during the 1950s and 1960s. Changes to the base influenced its later decades and occurred because of Subic Bay's geographic position in the Southwest Pacific and by the sonic culture of the base. Although the 1971-1973 period marked the twilight years for both the Vietnam War and the Nixon administration, it was also when the U.S. Navy became a permanent fixture at Subic Bay. After two decades of expanding infrastructure followed by U.S. forces departing Vietnam, Subic Bay and its companion installation Clark Air Base were the largest overseas U.S. military bases in Southeast Asia.

The U.S. Navy repurposed and built-up Subic Bay in the 1950s during the Eisenhower administration, but the base changed significantly between 1962-1971 during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. Philippine presidents Magsaysay, Garcia, and Macapagal participated in base negotiations and the first years of Ferdinand Marcos's (1965-1986) presidency overlapped with the changing sounds, structures, and culture of the base. Marcos's authoritarian control over the Philippines featured ten years of martial law,

supported overtly by the United States Government in exchange for uninterrupted use of Philippine land for U.S. military bases. I use 1971 as an end point because I consider it the peak moment of Subic Bay's growth and its strategic importance to the United States, and the last moment before it changed fully into a politicized symbol of U.S. hegemony, a colonial holdover. There are other years that could also work as bookends: 1972, the beginning of martial law in the Philippines under Marcos; 1973, when the last U.S. combat troops departed from Vietnam; 1975, the Fall of Saigon and the rush of Vietnamese refugees into the Philippines, specifically at Subic Bay; 1991-1993, the closure of Subic Bay and the removal of U.S. forces. After 1971, however, Subic Bay did not expand or change sonically, culturally, or militarily the way it did throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and the base's fate depended on political decisions instead of military ones. Between Marcos, People Power, protest groups, and increasing U.S. crimes committed against Filipinos, the U.S. Navy spent its last twenty years at Subic Bay treading political water to keep the base open and functioning. Although Subic Bay continued to support and project U.S. Naval power in Asia in the 1970s and 1980s, without a war, the base settled into the geopolitical background.

Despite proclaiming the Philippines one of America's greatest allies and the defender of democracy and capitalism in Asia, U.S. policy towards the Philippines – including the military – was often tone-deaf. The United States took its strong relationship with the Philippines for granted and hoped that money in the form of aid would offset growing anti-Americanism and anti-militarism in the archipelago. The United States was not interested in a stable Philippine nation from a selfless position; a reliable and fixed Philippine nation ensured a U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia and helped complete America's chain of

postwar overseas bases. Stephen Roskamm Shalom noted that “United States military strategy necessitated Philippine rehabilitation...the War Department’s key objective in the Philippines was the utilization by the United States of military bases in the islands.”³²⁵ Vicente Rafael argued further, writing that the entirety of U.S.-Philippine history reflects the concerns and interests of the United States exclusively, and not those of the Philippines. From the beginning, U.S. citizens did not view the Philippines as an independent nation, or its people civilized enough to govern themselves. Rafael writes that, “Given this putative absence of a Filipino nation, the U.S. presence in the archipelago could not be construed as usurping another people’s sovereignty. Intervention was understood, in official accounts, as an altruistic act motivated by American concern for the natives’ welfare on the part of the United States.”³²⁶ The U.S. military argued a variation of this viewpoint throughout the twentieth century, arguing that the presence of U.S. military bases in the Philippines benefitted the Philippines and achieved U.S. national security goals. As tensions simmered in the 1970s and 1980s, the U.S. updated its aid packages to the Philippines and offered concessions concerning the military bases. U.S. money and aid did not assuage Philippine nationalist momentum. Instead of a sustainable, stable, long-term, mutually beneficial security compact, the relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines after World War II gradually shifted into dissatisfaction in the years leading up to the People Power revolution.

Many U.S. military leaders argued against a large military presence in Southeast Asia post-World War II and favored rebuilding Europe. The Korean and Vietnam Wars changed the military’s view and demonstrated the value of American bases in the Philippines for supporting war and protecting regional interests. The Vietnam War profoundly impacted the

future of U.S. military bases in the Philippines and U.S.-Philippine relations. Expanding U.S. combat operations in Vietnam meant an increased military presence in the Philippines and continued U.S. support and aid for the Philippines in exchange for base rights. The U.S. military's new appreciation of U.S. bases in the Philippines presented Filipino leaders with an opportunity to negotiate for new terms and further concessions from the U.S. While representatives from both nations debated, negotiated, and updated the terms concerning those basing rights, Philippine President Marcos and U.S. Presidents Johnson and Nixon performed and postured for each other and for other world leaders, each attempting to outmaneuver the other for diplomatic high ground. As the Cold War continued, maintaining U.S. military bases in the Philippines became important to U.S. foreign policy: Peter J. Rimmer writes that, "As part of a policy on containment and in an action to secure capitalist expansion in the Asia-Pacific region, Subic Bay became part of an offshore chain of military installations stretching from Japan to the Philippines."³²⁷ The U.S. military sent forces to the Philippines for mutual defense, but also to secure access to Asian markets and as a check against Soviet influence as the Cold War took shape.

Although Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos supported U.S. military actions in Vietnam during the mid-1960s, he later demonstrated that his fundamental concern was further consolidating his own political power. His positive relationship with the United States was a calculated political tactic. In October 1969, with the Philippine presidential election a month away, Marcos rebranded himself as a Filipino nationalist and described "the presence of American bases in the Philippines as an insult to the dignity of the Filipino people."³²⁸ It was a shrewd political move to appease certain groups of Filipino voters, and

Marcos's statement also complemented his previous calls for new negotiations about agreements between the U.S. and the Philippines. Filipino voters reelected Marcos for a second presidential term, and the Philippines won a major concession from the United States during the 1970 negotiations: the U.S. removed troops from U.S. Naval Station, Sangley Point, in Cavite City, on Manila Bay, and turned the base over to the Philippine government in 1971. A year later, in 1972, President Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines.

Although such a major concession suggests a definitive Filipino renunciation of a colonial past with the United States and with the West, the Philippines and the U.S. remained fastened to each other as the U.S. military used other means to protect the longevity of U.S. bases in the Philippines. As Sangley Point closed, the U.S. military consolidated its resources in the Philippines between Subic and Clark, and the Navy completed the Subic-Basa-Clark petroleum pipeline in the early 1970s. The fuel pipeline ran from the coast at Subic inland to Clark Air Base that also experienced an increase in military activities. Even as the United States removed part of its physical presence from the Philippines, U.S. engineers put down infrastructure that cut physically and sonically through huge tracts of Luzon, a statement of U.S. power over and commitment to its relationship with the Philippines. The sounds of the U.S. Navy, too, defined the relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines.

Self-Noise

The U.S. Navy consistently dismissed the importance of sound despite the many ways that the sounds of the military structured life at Subic Bay and at sea. The unnamed

authors of the 1951 report “Noise Survey and Repair Procedures For Submarine Noise Reduction,” prepared by the Navy’s Bureau of Ships suggested the Navy focus on reducing its sonic footprint by reining in their sonic emissions.³²⁹ The report was written to “assist all personnel engaged in noise-reduction work.” It even begins with a helpful framing question, “Why Noise Reduction?”³³⁰ A closer reading of the report reveals, however, that the Navy’s interest in submarine noise reduction was not altruistic but driven by a desire for a more lethal and efficient fleet. The report’s authors explained that “the effectiveness of our submarines depends on their ability to remain undetected by the enemy” and advised that “a constant awareness of possible noise sources and methods for eliminating them is necessary in order to keep the submarine as quiet as possible.”³³¹ From a naval perspective, submarine sounds risked enemy attacks. Sounds were dangerous. Sounds were enemies of a quiet submarine.

The report also covered the science of sound including vibrations, noises, frequencies, reflections, sine waves, harmonics, infrasonic, and ultrasonic, and the authors presented practical solutions for underwater noise reduction based on these scientific principles. They advised a reduction goal of 20 decibels per case,³³² and encouraged sailors and submariners to trace and measure excess “structure-born” vibrational noise with a vibration meter, a sound level meter outfitted with a vibration pickup instead of a microphone or hydrophone.³³³ The authors also warned about the effects of “self noise,” the noises internal to a sonar or listening ship that disrupt or interfere with outward facing sonar hydrophones. U.S. sailors and submariners were asked to be critical listeners, observe the ship’s and their own “self noise,” and reduce the noise of their ships and themselves.³³⁴

These suggestions point to the intimate sonic relationships between ships, boats, and sailors and to the presence of sound as part of naval life and at a naval base.

The report's authors, however, did not consider the potential sound effects of a docked submarine. The Navy's policing of "self noise" did not extend beyond the confines of a boat or ship at sea or combat-related work. The report focused on deployed vessels and submarines. Its authors did not consider sounds in other contexts. Docks, piers, and quays of different ports that serviced docked ships and boats, however, were loud, busy spaces filled with ships under repair, workers, machine shops, and other materials. Submarines and their crews added to that sound space, yet a submarine in port for repairs was not considered a sonic actor in the same way a deployed vessel was. The Navy wanted to reduce ship or submarine noise at sea, not in port, even though upgrades, adjustments, and additional listening surveys could take place only in shipyards like Subic Bay.³³⁵

I frame this concluding chapter with the concept of "self-noise" and step back to conceptualize this entire dissertation with it. Self-noise is the point of this research: the self-noise of Naval Base, Subic Bay, of the people who lived and worked there, of the materials and infrastructures, and of the neighboring commercial and urban areas of the Philippines. I focused on the sounds internal to the U.S. Navy and the sounds produced inside Naval Base, Subic Bay. Historians ignored and neglected the U.S. Navy's self-noise, and a close listening of those sounds fills out the history of Subic Bay. In this final chapter I connect the themes and ideas that emerged from the preceding ones. The background factors in the shadows of each chapter, here make their more formal appearance: militarization, culture, geography, politics, security, empire, colonialism, and economics. I write about the U.S. Navy's diverse

and overlapping sonic spaces at Subic Bay and how sounds affected a range of other forces and issues. Sounds cut across a gamut of factors that shaped life for the U.S. Navy in the Philippines and were, ironically, silent in the historical record of Subic Bay. U.S. Naval personnel experienced the Philippines through sound, which also shaped their understanding of the people they met and worked with. I move forward from questions like “what did Subic Bay sound like,” and “who and what were listeners and auditors,” to “why did Subic Bay sound the way it did,” “what were the political stakes of sound,” and “what can we learn about U.S.-Philippine relations through sound?”

Domestic, City, and Industrial Sounds

I focused on three types of sound and sound areas at Subic Bay: domestic, city, and industrial. These sound-spaces impacted Navy personnel, local Filipinos, and the overall base culture and structure. I want to clarify that sounds heard in one of these areas were not limited to that space; music is the obvious exception, and I demonstrated that music was an overarching sonic feature of domestic, city, and industrial spaces. Although I wrote about three different areas of the base, there was sonic spillover or leakage into adjoining spaces. While the sounds of domesticity, city, and industry are represented in individual chapters, I understand the sounds of those spaces as parts of a whole, of the entirety of the base’s sonic spectrum and sonic emissions. They connected in a manner like Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso’s *interlocking soundscapes*, distinct soundscapes in dialogue with one another.³³⁶ These areas, each with a unique political-sonic ecology, formed the overall political ecology of sound at Subic Bay.

This triangulated sonic ecology of the base bears traces of Prussian military and strategy theorist Carl von Clausewitz's ideas on military basing in his chapter "Base of Operations" from his 1832 treatise, *On War*. Clausewitz's writing on military strategy and theory remains a reference for point for contemporary military officers, strategists, historians, and critics. Clausewitz argued that "the base of an Army is a triple formation" a formation consisting of the relationship between the resources from an Army's current position, storage of those and brought resources, and "the province from which these stores are derived or collected."³³⁷ The sound-spaces I describe overlay Clausewitz's triple formation of base operations: he describes the local area (city), stores and depots (industry), and resources of the home province (domestic). Clausewitz also wrote that a base of operations is "the foundation of the Army and all its undertakings, and the two must be regarded as forming in connection only one whole."³³⁸ The postwar ring of overseas U.S. military bases demonstrated Clausewitz's observation, as the Navy's influence and power in the Pacific depended on its bases facilitating its global supply-chain. I expand Clausewitz's framework of military base economics and include the cultural and the sonic. The sounds of a military base organize military personnel and functions. Sound, space, and infrastructure are co-constitutive "forming in connection only one whole" at military bases. Sound gives that whole – in this case Subic Bay and the U.S. Navy – more depth, more character, and more history.

Although the domestic, city, and industrial areas of Subic Bay were military spaces beyond the battlefield, the innate sounds of those spaces related to combat zones. I return to one of my research goals, to expand the scope and use of J. Martin Daughtry's *the belliphonic*,

“the spectrum of sounds produced by armed combat.”³³⁹ Beyond armed combat, Daughtry introduced the term “to encompass sonic material that is less directly or conventionally associated with warfare,” and I write within and against that theoretical and methodological space.³⁴⁰ I showed that military bases shape the belliphonic and facilitate the sounds of war geographically and temporally away from the battlefield. This was the reality at Naval Base, Subic Bay during the mid-twentieth century, a place distant from armed combat on the ground, in the air, and on the seas happening in Vietnam. The distance from the fighting didn’t exclude Subic Bay from wartime sounds, but featured different sonic experiences and materials, and demonstrates the scalar stakes and reach of overseas U.S. militarization.

Ethnomusicologist Jim Sykes argues for an expanded definition of “the sounds of war” that better represents sonic envelopment during wartime. Sykes writes about how

“the sounds of war” are defined as the sounds of bombs, shells, tanks, guns, torture and raids rather than by the sound of a mother crying outside a prison for her detained son. The sounds of everyday life are absent or placed in a sharp dialectic with the sounds of war. Women and children (as soldiers, civilians, widows, refugees and so on) are notably absent.³⁴¹

Sykes notes that the sounds of war receiving the largest share of criticism and attention are those spectacular and terrible ones – the tools and warriors of war. He suggests that studies of wartime sound should include people, objects, events, and spaces affected by war but not involved in combat. Daughtry suggested this, too. He outlined the belliphonic as a conceptual space home to the diversity of wartime sounds, and the people and materials who make them and hear them. Daughtry and Sykes work within the “sounds of war”

framework, and both argue that war sound affects the experiences of people and places in the midst and adjacent to war. War produces moments of intense sound and heavy silences, creates urgency in listening and deafens physically. Gavin Williams argues a similar position in his introduction in *Hearing the Crimean War*, a collection that aims to “shift attention away from battlefields and much-studied (elite, male) military actors, toward the temporalities established by sounds in motion: temporalities that embrace civilian actors, and, crucially, help to make up for the conspicuous absence of women in discussion of war’s sounds.”³⁴² The emerging body of scholarship on wartime sound challenges traditional military histories that sidelined women and non-combat actors.

Taking cues from Daughtry, Sykes, and Williams, I wrote about the incongruent and contradictory ways that sound, space, and people intersected at Subic Bay during but away from war. American military families, industrial machinery, and the throbbing nightclubs of Olongapo City coexisted in sonic proximity to each other. The U.S. Navy’s Seventh Fleet, based at Subic Bay, impacted and structured base and city sound life. I also showed that sound is an important yet neglected part of U.S. Naval history. Sound is a different way to study military bases and naval culture. Beyond probing intersections of sound and naval history, I scrutinized a period of time at Subic Bay often skipped in favor of more salient periods of U.S.-Philippine history, including the earlier American colonial period and the Marcos martial law years. Studies about the U.S. and the Philippines and the United States lean towards periodizations culminating in 1945, at the close of World War II. Some studies focus on the years following World War II while others examine the politics of the 1970s

and 1980s. Scholars avoid or struggle with the period in between, the 1950s and 1960s, when the U.S. and the Philippines renegotiated their relationship and set the terms for the future.

The Philippines, Security, and Vital Systems

The U.S. Navy sent troops and ships to the Philippines at Subic Bay after World War II for economic and diplomatic reasons related to U.S. concerns about security and geopolitics in the emerging Cold War era. Although the U.S. military's size diminished after the war, the United States held on to hundreds of military bases and smaller installations acquired or captured during the war – the beginning of a new era of global security dictated by the United States. Indeed, Michel Foucault asked whether “the general economy of power in our societies is becoming a domain of security?”³⁴³ Foucault's lectures in *Security, Territory, and Population* detailed his expansion of the biopolitical to space, sovereignty, and security apparatuses, what he called security *dispositifs*. The answer to Foucault's question in the context of the United States during the twentieth century is clear. Aside from the brief drawdown of the U.S. military under President Harry Truman in the late 1940s, a security economy powered the United States throughout the twentieth century. The U.S. justified its military actions politically and asserted control, power, and influence around the globe through a large network of overseas military bases, like Naval Base, Subic Bay in the Pacific. And as I discussed in chapter II, the scope of U.S. militarization penetrated domestic spaces, and affected the sounds and the culture of mid-century American life, the era of women-led suburban, civil defense. The American military-industrial complex had parallels in culture and economics, and the Navy spread the sounds of military dominance across the Pacific.

Geographer Sasha Davis argues that the U.S. deployed its military to the Pacific as a function of *vital systems security*, and valued the Pacific islands “for their strategic positions from which the vital system can be secured.”³⁴⁴ He argues that, “since at least the 1890s, the major concern of American power in the Pacific has been not to defend the island spaces from attack, and not to provide and care for the populations that live on them, but to defend, protect, and steer the vital system of international trade with Asia.”³⁴⁵ The U.S. guarded its economic interests in the Philippines and in Asia post-World War II by protecting vital systems in the region, rather than implementing an overt project of settler or exploitative neocolonialism. The U.S. did, however, maintain maritime enclaves, a colonial system of overseas naval ports that protected U.S. interests at sea. The maritime enclave system split the difference between hard and soft power approaches. U.S. military bases present at locations like Subic Bay, however, continued to impose U.S. control over the Philippines. Features of that dynamic included colonial-inspired military initiatives via settlement (U.S. controlled territory in the Philippines), colonial exploitation (local workers dependent upon the base economy), and extraction (oil). Reflecting Foucault’s analysis, the United States sustained biopolitical, security, and economic power in the region by protecting or securing the existing systems under its control. U.S. power derived as much from global trade as from the infrastructures powering the global economy and the security of those infrastructures. Beginning in the 1970s, U.S. vital systems security in Asia and throughout the Pacific grew into “the idea of the Pacific Rim,” what Christopher Connery describes as a U.S. “geo-imaginary,” “determined by the particular stage of late capitalism marked by that period and by the economic and political situation of the United States in the late Cold War years.”³⁴⁶ Connery writes that the developing U.S.-China relationship and the

end of the Vietnam War created space for a Pacific Rim imaginary governed by U.S. security *and* economic interests.

Stephen J. Collier and Andrew Lakoff developed the concept of vital systems security, a riff and expansion on Foucault's conceptualizing of biopolitical security. They argue that vital systems security, is "a significant mutation in biopolitical modernity."³⁴⁷ They describe how vital systems security departs from both classical sovereignty – the security of the state – and modern biopolitics – the security of the population. Collier and Lakoff write how:

with the intensification of modernization and industrialization processes, planners and policy-makers recognized that collective life had become dependent upon interlinked systems such as transportation, electricity, and water. Indeed, the very instruments of biopolitical government, which aimed to foster the health and wellbeing of the population, came to be seen as a potential source of vulnerability.³⁴⁸

Collier and Lakoff describe a self-reflexive, meta-biopolitical system. In this system, societal and state security depended on the stability and continuity of material infrastructures that powered the state's ability to control, regulate, and secure its population. This led to what they call *system vulnerability thinking* – a way of thinking that governments used to "understand and manage collective life."³⁴⁹ System vulnerability thinking encompassed regulations, maintenance, and metrics to make sense of huge systems and infrastructures – what was later called systems analysis. Matthew Farish wrote how systems analysis developed from Norbert Wiener's conceiving of cybernetics during the late 1940s, and that cybernetics "quickly became a heavily militarized "universal discipline."³⁵⁰ He argues further that "the

military-industrial complex diagnosed by departing president Dwight Eisenhower was a cybernetic entity.”³⁵¹ Military bases depended on vital systems for sustainability, and vital systems relied on military bases for security and maintenance. Although vital systems have a seemingly superficial a relationship with the sonic, I located their sounds in an oblique manner. Vital systems generated many sounds at Subic Bay, located in performances of vital system virility, including construction projects, artillery firing dills, and ship and aircraft exercises. The U.S. commitment to global vital systems security was a political reality that I use to wedge open and interrogate the potential imperial, cultural, and sonic implications of the U.S. Naval presence in the Philippines at Subic Bay.

The growth of the U.S. vital system security state had historical precedents in American imperial and colonial expansion. Historian Paul Kramer argues that although many scholars focus on the ontology of the American imperial, “we should instead emphasize what it does, what kinds of analyses it enables and forecloses.”³⁵² In Kramer’s definition of the imperial he describes “asymmetries in the scale of political action,” including discrepancies in scalar power “exercised in military, economic, political, or cultural terms” and the “material, institutional, and discursive organization of space...non-territorial, networked forms of spatial order.”³⁵³ These two parts of his definition informed my thoughts about space, sound, culture, and militarism intersecting at overseas U.S. military bases. While Kramer was not thinking about sound and imperialism, historian Bruce R. Smith argued that “in its circularity, continuity, and directionality, the shape of empire replicates the shape of sound,” and R. Murray Schafer wrote earlier about how “the territorial expansion of post-industrial sounds complemented the imperialistic ambitions of

the Western nations.”³⁵⁴ Both Smith and Schafer identified in sonic projections a tendency towards asymmetrical immersion and colonization of the ears. Adapting Kramer’s question and asking what military sound *does*, rather what it *is*, moves the discussion beyond exterior descriptions of sounds and their sources. I argue that military sounds do many things besides filling space. Sounds create structure and convey information, and in a military base context define and mark the culture of those places. Sound, security, and imperialism exist close together.

Studying sound can help enrich discussions about vital systems security and about a state’s imperial politics. Sound provides a deeper understanding of place, people, and materials; it puts readers at the ground level and shows the real, lived, and everyday effects of culture from a global, technocratic vital systems security system. I observed naval technocracy in many of the archival U.S. Navy materials I read. Indeed, modern U.S. Navy training during the Cold War domestically and abroad is partly to blame for the rise of a technocratic United States. Service members were promoted by demonstrating a minimum level of effectiveness in a designated military occupational specialty (MOS). Technical ability thus translated to greater responsibility, monetary gains, and institutional power. This system in the context of Subic Bay and overseas military bases gave Navy leaders an inflated sense of expertise when it came to negotiations with Filipinos and the Philippine government. This was clear in Navy records that proclaimed to understand Filipino culture, character, and way-of-life. What did a U.S. ship pilot or radar operator know about the Philippines? What were they taught? What did they learn? Cultural training and awareness were afterthoughts, lesser concerns.

A 1964 Cold War Policy memo issued by the Department of the Navy and written for the U.S. Navy's Philippine-based forces, encouraged naval officers to engage in a range of activities with local Filipino communities "for the successful prosecution of the cold war." They were to "offer military talent shows, musical and theatrical productions, film showings," "arrange for local women and men to teach their American counterparts local cooking, dancing, arts and handicrafts, musical instruments," and to "promote instruction on voluntary basis, in subjects of immediate interest or potential interest to local civilians, such as English, American history and culture, American Government, and other subjects that will promote the objectives of explaining ourselves to other people."³⁵⁵ The memo's suggestions assumed that all Filipinos were eager to learn about the United States and become acceptable American subjects and allies by embracing American culture, including the sounds of language, music, crafts, films, and other performances. Although the encouraged activities were collaborative and interactive, the Navy's ultimate objective was for a "successful prosecution of the cold war." To prosecute the war was "to continue with a course of action with a view to its accomplishment or completion."³⁵⁶ This memo defined the Navy's culture-front of the Cold War in the Philippines. The Navy and the DoD intended to see the conflict through on their terms and made war in many forms. Expressive arts and education were tools to secure positive relations with the Philippines.

The memo is a study in technocratic militarism. Its authors encouraged service members to weaponize culture "for the successful prosecution of the cold war." For the technocrats of the 1960s, Kennedy and McNamara's "whiz kids" - "the best and brightest" - and their university counterparts, the soft power of culture was another system to establish,

organize, and control.³⁵⁷ That hubris undermined U.S. military and diplomatic ventures in Southeast Asia. Their attempts to generate data and metrics put them at a great distance from how sound and culture impacted everyday life. Edward Said observed the “extraordinary asymmetry” in the age of American “Development and Modernization,” and the policy ideas influenced by systems analysis.³⁵⁸ Systems analysts tried to convert the messy study of humanity into a clinical study of systems. The Philippines experienced an earlier version of U.S. system analytical control. Historian Alfred McCoy wrote how the U.S. policy makers used the Philippines as a colonial laboratory to experiment with biopolitics and security in policing, surveillance, and intelligence-gathering.³⁵⁹ While McCoy and Said argue that these characteristics bear the mark of “classical imperial hegemony,” Said goes further, and writes that “where it differs in the American century is the quantum leap in the reach of cultural authority, thanks in large measure to the unprecedented growth in the apparatus for the diffusion and control of information.”³⁶⁰ Said wrote how expanding American control of telecommunication, including sounds and infrastructure, shaped the cultural.

The U.S. military’s Cold War era of systems, security, and technocracy brought culture into its orbit. Culture was taken over by technocrats in the military or contracted out to scientists, social scientists, and analysts in the academy.³⁶¹ The military’s attempt to weaponize culture from a systems analysis perspective was flawed. The Navy understood that sound and music mattered; officers and special services divisions understood that music and recreation improved troop readiness and morale. Subic Bay’s commanders also sensed that music, sound, and culture played a role in how U.S. sailors and local Filipinos interacted. Although naval leaders actively supported entertainment at the base, they invested fewer

resources towards understanding how sounds produced by the base and naval personnel affected relations with the local community. The U.S. Navy wanted the results of a culture-based public outreach program but did not commit the necessary time and resources to arrive at that goal. A culture- and sound-based approach to the history of Subic Bay, therefore, challenges the technocratic administrative, military, and other official and unofficial histories of Subic Bay during the mid-twentieth century. Emphasizing cultural materials and interpretations helps to balance out the extreme perspectives of U.S.-Philippine history; sailors and Filipinos existed beyond the prostitution industry, and the naval base itself was more than a military-industrial apparatus. By reading U.S. naval texts critically scholars can provide that missing nuance to Subic Bay, U.S. Naval, and U.S.-Philippine historical narratives. Such an approach also demonstrates how the Navy thought strategically about culture and sound in the Philippines.

At the Meeting Point of Sound, Culture, and Militarization

Synne L. Dyvik and Lauren Greenwood wrote that “militarism and militarization have in recent years often been sidelined in much academic debate, consequently creating a gap in research across the social sciences.”³⁶² Critical discourse on militarism and militarization is not as popular in the social sciences as it was one and two generations ago. Studies of the military remain outliers in the humanities and within music studies. Music scholars address militarization as a background force and as an analytical foundation to address pressing issues for in the humanities – war, trauma, violence, memory, and capitalism. This lack of engagement with the structures of militarization left a critical void concerning U.S. military power. I found the reverse true for scholars and professionals who

work on military history; training and experience with cultural studies is less emphasized. Militarization, “sidelined in much academic debate,” reflects how U.S. military culture is detached from the rest of U.S. society. There should be a common space to discuss how culture and militarization connect.

I have demonstrated the value of writing a military history from a humanities, sound, and cultural vantagepoint. I started this project from a position of blind critique. I thought I was going to learn and write about the role of sound in communicating U.S. imperialism and facilitating violence against Filipinos, and then analyze the asymmetry of U.S.-Philippine relations. That is what happened, but as I wrote this concluding chapter, I recognized I developed a more balanced perspective. I see more of the messiness and nuance in the U.S. Navy’s history in the Philippines. I challenged myself to separate the micro from macro, the bottom-up cultural lens from the official, military-based, geopolitical one. It is easy to fall into familiar binaries, to identify heroes and villains or those with power and those without. I think history through sound narrows the critical distance between studies about culture and militarization.

I also think about sound studies differently. I don’t think of a history though sound as simply a means to disrupt “the nagging dominance of the visual,” and like James Steintrager and Rey Chow, I’m not interested in “re-litigating the case in defense of sound.”³⁶³ Nor have I written passages and vignettes about sound “in the service of literary flourishes.”³⁶⁴ I think of history through sound as a method to “imagine the past and the present as sensed, tactile places that remember and haunt.”³⁶⁵ One of sound studies’ issues is the subfield’s self-congratulatory tone, the meta-narrative of the discipline’s uphill battle to

reframe the hierarchy of the senses, to decenter the eye by way of the ear. At this point in the discipline's existence sound studies should move towards bigger questions and integrate fully into the humanities. Sound is now more than a trendy niche; it has reinvigorated disciplines like media studies, music studies, film studies, history, and anthropology. Studies of and through sound now point to new ways of approaching a research topic, and scholars in many fields use sound to intervene in their academic fields. Sound is not an afterthought or a hook.

Studying the sounds of Subic Bay impressed upon me the close relationship between sound, space, and place. Matt Sakakeeny wrote how “place is sensed through sound” and even though the Subic Bay of the past no longer exists or resounds, listening for the historical sounds of the base is a way to sense that place out of its time.³⁶⁶ I described the acoustemology of an historical, overseas U.S. military base. A closer model is Emily Thompson's *The Soundscape of Modernity*, a work about “restoring the aural dimension of modernity to our understanding of it.”³⁶⁷ Like Thompson, I aim to restore sound to U.S. history by writing about the U.S. Navy in the Philippines during the 1950s and 1960s. Scholars might neglect the sonic dimensions of history because they are uncomfortable with what Steven Connor calls the *vocalic uncanny*, the “sourceless voice.”³⁶⁸ Writing about sonic moments of the past is a challenge to straightforward distinctions between primary and secondary sources. Even in a primary account sound is secondhand, already interpreted and removed from its source in a written or recorded context. I read history obliquely, and I listened to soundless texts and documents not about sound. I demonstrated that reading and

writing history through sound can be done in a critical manner, through materials with or without references to the impact of sound.

The U.S. Navy was aware that cultural differences could complicate diplomatic negotiations, affect media representation, and influence US-Philippine relations. The Navy's interest in understanding cultural differences was to create sustainable diplomacy, and to avoid bad press. The Navy identified the fundamental paradox it faced in negotiating relations with the Philippines: Filipinos were their allies and their enemies. A 1959 study on U.S. Military Base security detailed how studying Filipino culture could "promote better relationships" and avoid "adverse publicity." Cultural knowledge could also arm Americans with tools to better defend against crimes committed by Filipinos within and against American military bases.³⁶⁹ In no uncertain terms, the draft argues that "To guard ourselves against Filipinos we should understand some of their basic viewpoints."³⁷⁰ For Navy officers concerned with security at Subic Bay, understanding Filipino culture was simply a means that helped in the fight against Filipino looters and criminals. It was a way to understand their motives and stop them, not to establish a healthy working environment with the Filipinos living near the base. Culture was a military tool or a tactic, and not coming from a place of grace, friendliness, or honesty.

Although there were moments at Subic Bay in the 1950s and 1960s when the U.S. Navy was concerned about the political ramifications of military-industrial sound, such sensitivity was rare and reflected U.S. policies and attitudes towards the Philippines. A former colony turned ally, the Philippines was supposed to be a U.S.-style capitalist democracy and the geopolitical anchor of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia. The strength

of the U.S.-Philippine relationship was assumed by U.S. leaders, and local concerns about the Navy's sonic impact didn't register the way that issues like legal jurisdiction and sovereignty did. In a 1961 letter to John D. Hickerson, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines, President Kennedy wrote that "the practice of modern diplomacy requires a close understanding not only of governments but also of people, their cultures and institutions," and that "it is our task not only to understand what motivates others, but to give them a better understanding of what motivates us."³⁷¹ The letter bears Kennedy's trademark optimism and belief in honest and empathic cultural understanding as the keys to international relations. Kennedy could have addressed his letter about intercultural exchange to the sailors and naval officers at Subic Bay. U.S. sailors and marines stationed in the Philippines displayed their ignorance and misunderstanding of Filipino culture. The U.S. Departments of Defense, Navy, and State took superficial steps to cultivate sustainable cultural relationships with the Navy's Filipino neighbors at Subic Bay and Olongapo City.

Kennedy's message could also have instigated a degree of self-reflection about how U.S. naval culture – including sounds and materials – impacted local communities in the Philippines. The Navy could have come to appreciate that the sounds of the base conveyed a range of meanings to different groups of people; might have recognized the effects of the sounds they created at the base; and could have recognized that American actions overseas in a host nation are political, even the ubiquitous sounds, infrastructures, and materials that make a place unique. The U.S. Navy's failure to establish a true dialogue with Filipinos at Subic Bay that accounted for the sonic, political, and industrial impacts on local culture captures reveals a fundamental tension of U.S.-Philippine relations – American unwillingness

to acknowledge a colonial heritage of military occupation. The real geographic distance between the U.S. and the Philippines combined with a deliberate cultural distance made Subic Bay a place distant and unfamiliar, a passing reference, peripheral, assumed, and ultimately opaque to Americans.

Subic Bay turns up, however, in unlikely places, like John Kerry's recent autobiography, where he described Subic Bay as a "unique sailors' port," a place where "the stories are legendary."³⁷² It's not hard to see Kerry's knowing wink in his description, which reinforces reductive historical narratives about Subic Bay and its reputation for neon lights, loud music, and prostitution. Even Kerry, the great diplomat, gets a cheap laugh at the expense of the Philippines and Subic Bay. These passing references to the nightlife and local culture reflect the average sailor's experience with the base – fleeting and exciting. It is like the base existed as an imaginary destination, a concave historical space, its edges shiny and prominent while its inner gears and culture collapse and disappear. It is worth revisiting the base's history in micro detail, through its sounds and materials. Sounds at Subic Bay were never isolated; sounds reflected politics, economics, diplomacy, and culture, and resounded through the materials of military industry and domesticity.

Listening obliquely to the history of U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay demonstrates the extent and diversity of the U.S. Navy's self-noise in the Philippines during the base's growth in the 1950s and 1960s. Within that self-noise were sound cultures of infrastructure, industry, domesticity, and urban politics and socioeconomics. The base sound like an American suburban community, a series of industrial warehouse, and a chaotic city. A history of Subic Bay through sound shows that the military relationship between the United

States and the Philippines was as complicated at the everyday, lived level as it was at geopolitical and diplomatic spheres. The people who lived, worked, and experienced the base listened and adjusted to the cadences of the U.S. Navy's self-noise. In many instances, the presence and impact of self-noise highlighted larger political and military tensions between the U.S. and the Philippines. The oblique method also demonstrates that sonic narratives are influenced by who chooses to listen and what they choose to listen to. Sound was an important cultural and political force at Subic Bay, and sounds carried different messages to different groups of people. The political fallout of sound was sometimes a concern for U.S. Navy personnel, but the everyday drone of Naval self-noise was not an important environmental concern. Obliquely listening to and studying Naval Base, Subic Bay adds new perspectives and interpretations to common narratives of Subic Bay and counters the base's descent into historical familiarity and cliché. Listening to different voices and moments makes the base feel unfamiliar, and ultimately makes the study of its impact on Cold War geopolitics, the Philippines and Filipinos, and U.S. service members and their families more complicated and rewarding.

Returns

As early as the 1964, the U.S. military considered shifting its defense and security emphasis in the Philippines to the southern islands around Mindanao. Instead, the expansion and later end of the war in Vietnam meant that Naval Base, Subic Bay and Clark Air Base on the northern island Luzon – closest to the Vietnamese coast – were the U.S. military's main installations in the Philippines. Their location put them in a more strategic position to mainland Southeast Asia, China, and as a stopover point for U.S. ships and boats sailing to

Diego Garcia and the Middle East. This was the pattern at Subic and Clark until their closure and abandonment in the early 1990s. The combination of anti-base rhetoric, the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, negotiation deadlines, and a nationalist Philippine politics made the U.S. military position in the Philippines untenable in its then current arrangement. By 1993, the U.S. military removed its forces and left behind the innards of its military bases. The retrograde of U.S. forces was a real and symbolic moment of colonial unburdening for the Philippines, the culmination of decades of political activism against the U.S. military, against its own homegrown corruption, and the martial law years under President Ferdinand Marcos.

Beginning in 1997, the U.S. and the Philippines entered negotiations and signed a Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) in 1999, which granted the U.S. legal jurisdiction and general oversight related to crimes and issues committed by U.S. service members in the Philippines. Despite the closures of Subic and Clark in the Philippines, the U.S. military never left: the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty kept the U.S. and the Philippines connected militarily, and U.S. military personnel, ships, and aircraft continued to train, refuel, and resupply in the Philippines. And since the mid-1980s, the Philippine military has hosted U.S. troops for the Balikatan – “shoulder-to-shoulder” joint-military exercises. These exercises strengthened the U.S.-Philippine partnership as the U.S. “War on Terror” expanded into the southern provinces of the Philippines (part of Operation Enduring Freedom). Both militaries grew closer when the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) was approved and upheld by the Philippine Supreme Court in 2016. The agreement

expanded the VFA and allowed the United States to send troops to the Philippines for longer deployments and to build military installations for use by U.S. and Philippine forces.

In closing, I reflect again on my position as a military spouse and critical humanist in relation to the U.S. armed forces. My personal life bled into my work researching and writing this dissertation. While writing, one of my neighbors deployed with Marine Corps special forces to the southern Philippines (and has since returned). I don't know about his mission, his training, or his activities in the Philippines because he is a special forces officer. The overlap between my personal and professional life is peculiar because the U.S. Navy (including the Marine Corps) is present in the Philippines, again. U.S. ships continue to refuel at Subic Bay, U.S. Marines deploy to the southern provinces, and semi-permanent and permanent buildings are built and filled with U.S. military personnel. It is like nothing has changed since the 1960s. And maybe nothing changed. U.S. foreign policy experts absorbed U.S. military culture as another tool of international relations and diplomacy.

The U.S. Navy's history at Subic Bay, Philippines is recent history, close to the present. My everyday proximity to the people and institutions that perpetuate American militarization in the Philippines is current history and important to how I think about U.S.-Philippine history. When my neighbor deployed to the Philippines, his absence on the street was a reminder of the complicated history of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines. In their introduction for the inaugural issue of *Critical Military Studies*, Victoria M. Basham, Aaron Belkin, and Jess Gifkins described how that issue's articles "highlight well how the distinctions between what is "inside" the military and what is "outside" the military are thus constantly shifting."³⁷³ Nothing better captures my own feelings and research position.

Interviews with the veterans Jim Pope and David Ball left me feeling “inside” and sympathetic, while reading military technocrats made me feel on the “outside,” and happy to be there. I am in both places, always adjusting. And like the critical study of the military, what constitutes the inside and outside is malleable and thus difficult to catch, measure, and write about. Joseph Soeters, Patricia M. Shields, and Sebastiaan Rietjens, editors of the *Routledge Handbook of Military Research*, argue that “studying the military is probably more complex because, more than other organizations, the military is a world on its own, an island within a society-at-large.”³⁷⁴ Although I have the advantage of access to that insulated world, it has not made analyzing easier. Instead, being “inside” raised the personal and professional stakes of my research. I think listening to the sounds of history and the U.S. military has value, and I think the best way to address how those disciplinary perspectives intersect is to listen to the people, spaces, and materials on either side of the walls and gates of a military base like Subic Bay. The inside and the outside together constitute the culture, sounds, and politics of a military base.

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I was sitting in the backyard enjoying the sunshine and writing. My wife and I live about two miles from the ocean on the east side of the 5 Interstate. During the day I can hear the traffic. Through the din of chirping birds, cars, and the ocean breeze, I heard a chorus of male voices shouting in unison. Across the field that separates the military family housing subdivisions where I live is the rest of the base, where a nearby company of Marines exercised outside. Their cadences cut through all the other sounds at that moment, a reminder that despite the beautiful scenery and tranquility around me, I’m living on a military

base. The base is defined by the sounds of the military – in this case, the sounds of young, male Marines. I often feel distant from my field site. The Subic Bay I write about no longer exists, and is different from the Subic Bay of fifty, sixty, and seventy years ago. At other times, I am reminded that I live in my field every day.

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